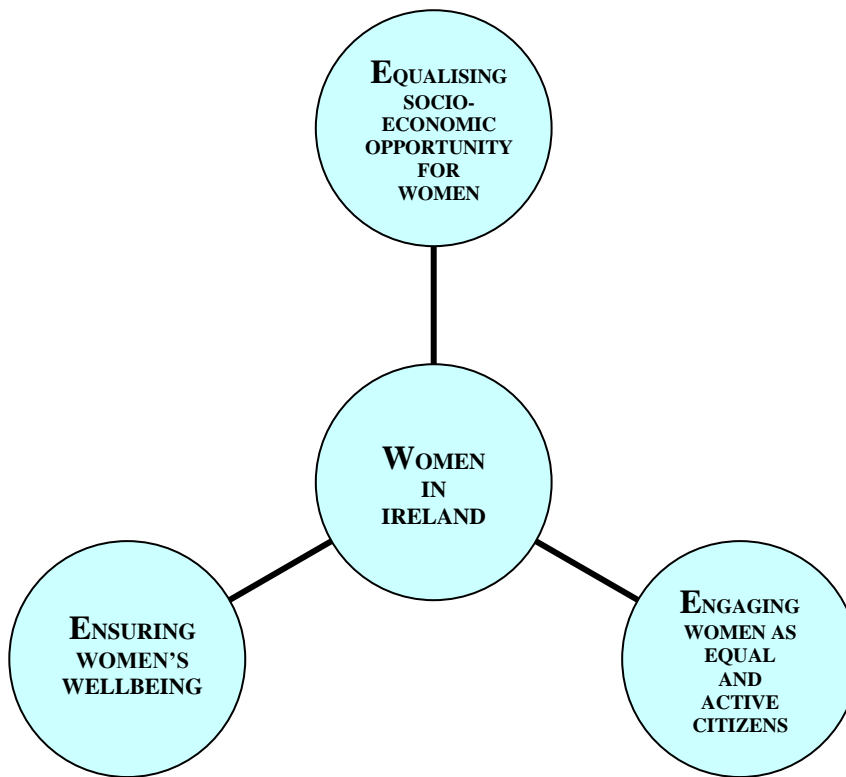


Implementing the National Women's Strategy 2007 – 2016



PROGRESS 2010



AN ROINN DLÍ AGUS CIRT AGUS COMHIONANNAIS
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND EQUALITY



NATIONAL WOMEN'S STRATEGY
2007-2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Acknowledgements	2
Executive Summary	3
CHAPTER	
1 Introduction and Overview	9
2. Gender Equality - The International Dimension	13
3 Theme 1 - Equalising Socio-Economic Opportunity for Women	25
4 Theme 2 - Ensuring the Wellbeing of Women	51
5. Theme 3 - Engaging Women as Equal and Active Citizens	73
6. Implementing the National Women's Strategy	83
Postscript	87
Appendix I – A Women’s Charter (European Commission)	89
Appendix II – Terms of Reference of the Sub-Committee on Women in Decision-Making	91
Appendix III – Extracts on Women in Politics from Joint Oireachtas Committee on the Constitution	93
LIST OF TABLES	
Table 1 - Update of Key Indicators on Women 1971 – 2010	10
Table 2 - Selected Census Statistics in Relation to Women – 2002 and 2006 and Population Estimates for 2010	10
Table 3 - Women in Employment and Enterprise – Some Headline Statistics	25
Table 4 - Employment Rates (Women and Men Aged 15-64) in EU Member States – 2009 EU	25
Table 5 - Persons Aged 15 Years and Over Classified by Sex and Economic Status 2007 - 2010	26
Table 6 – Number of females completing FÁS programmes by programme type and year	28
Table 7 - Gender Pay Gap (Unadjusted) 2007 – EU	31
Table 8 - Employment: Broad Occupational Groups by Sex 2007, 2009 and 2010	33

	Page
Table 9 - Women Early Stage Entrepreneurs 2006 - 2008	34
Table 10 - Growth Expectations of Men and Women Entrepreneurs (2004-2008)	34
Table 11 - Numbers Taking Selected Subjects 2007, 2009 and 2010 – Boys and Girls	37
Table 12 – Funding to Teen Parenting Support Projects in 2010	39
Table 13 - Recipients of Carer’s Allowance, Benefit and Respite Care Grant 2009	43
Table 14 – Profile of the Population who are at Risk Of Poverty and in Consistent Poverty by Sex of Head of Household 2008 and 2009	45
Table 15 - Number of Recipients of One-Parent Family Payment by Status of Parent, Age and Sex, 2009	47
Table 16 – Summary of outcomes for pilot programme participants of FÁS Social Inclusion Model	49
Table 17 - Women’s Participation in National Politics – EU - 2005 And 2010 EU	73
Table 18 - Women’s Participation as Leaders in Business – EU	74
Table 19 – Four Strands of the Equality for Women Measure	84
Table 20 – Breakdown of EWM Projects by Strand	85
Table 21 – EWM Participants from Vulnerable Groups	85

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The National Women's Strategy (NWS) was launched in April 2007. The Strategy is the Government's policy document in relation to the advancement of women in Irish society for the period 2007 - 2016.
- 1.2 The Strategy contains 20 key objectives and over 200 planned actions which together aim to achieve *an Ireland where all women enjoy equality with men and can achieve their full potential while enjoying a safe and fulfilling life*¹.
- 1.3 The objectives and actions contained in the Strategy are grouped under the three key themes of:
- Equalising socio-economic opportunity for women;
 - Ensuring the well-being of women; and
 - Engaging women as equal and active citizens.
- 1.4 Implementation of the Strategy is overseen by the NWS Monitoring Committee, which is chaired by the Minister of State with responsibility for Equality. The Monitoring Committee is representative of key Government Departments, relevant State Agencies and the Social Partners, including the National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI).
- 1.5 The second Progress Report on the implementation of the National Women's Strategy to end 2009 was submitted to Government in November 2010 and was published in December 2010.
- 1.6 This Progress Report, prepared by the Gender Equality Division, Department of Justice and Equality² outlines the progress made during 2010.

2. Operational environment

- 2.1 In Ireland, the economic downturn first began to manifest itself in the second quarter of 2008. In the early stages of the downturn, male employment was affected to a much greater extent than female employment due to the high numbers of men employed in the construction sector. However, indicators at the end of 2008 showed that the numbers of women becoming unemployed was beginning to increase.
- 2.2 In the three year period between 2008 and 2010 a five percentage point decline in the female employment rate is observed. However, it is important to note that the male employment rate declined by fourteen percentage points over the same timeframe and that there was a significant increase in the female population in the same period.
- 2.3 The female employment rate in Quarter 4 2010 was 55.7 per cent, compared with a rate of 57.0 per cent in Quarter 4 2009.

3. International dimension

3.1 *European Union*

- 3.1.1 The European Union, and in particular the Commissioner with responsibility for Employment, spoke during 2010 about the need to maintain a focus on gender equality and gender issues during the economic downturn. In particular, the Commission was of the view that there was a need to ensure that gender is taken into account when Member States are planning their austerity measures for economic recovery, bearing in mind the differential impacts these measures may have on women and men.

¹ National Women's Strategy 2007 – 2016: Vision

² Gender Equality Division transferred to Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs for a period of ten months from June 2009.

3.1.2 During 2010, the Presidency of the European Union was held by Spain and Belgium. The Council of the European Union is the principal decision-making institution in the EU. Council Conclusions relating to gender equality which were adopted during 2010 related to:

- *The Eradication of Violence against Women in the European Union;*
- *Supporting the implementation of the European Commission's Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015; and*
- *Strengthening the commitment and stepping up action to close the gender pay gap, and review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.*

3.1.3 The European Commission launched its new **Strategy for Equality between women and men 2010-2015** on 21st September 2010. The Strategy identifies five priority areas for action:

- Equal economic independence;
- Equal pay for equal work or work of equal value;
- Equality in decision-making;
- Dignity, integrity and an end to gender-based violence; and
- Gender equality in external actions.

3.1.4 The EU Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men adopted three Opinions during 2010:

- Opinion on flexible and part-time working arrangements and the gender dimension of the labour market;
- Opinion on breaking stereotypes in the media; and
- Opinion on an EU Strategy on Violence against Women and Girls.

3.1.5 The Europe 2020 Strategy adopted in mid 2010 sets out the EU's economic policy for the period to 2020 and aims to create a high technology sustainable economy. It includes a goal of an employment rate of 75 per cent for women and men by end 2020, an ambitious target, particularly for countries badly affected by the economic downturn. It envisages that the economic engagement of increased numbers of women will assist in achieving this goal.

3.2 **Council of Europe**

3.2.1 The 7th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Equality between Women and Men was held in Baku, Azerbaijan, on 24/25 May 2010. The theme of the Conference was "*Bridging the gap between de jure and de facto equality to achieve real gender equality*". A Resolution was adopted on this topic along with an Action Plan entitled "*Taking up the challenge of the achievement of de jure and de facto gender equality*".

3.2.2 In July 2010, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted a recommendation on the role of women and men in conflict resolution and peace building '**Recommendation CM/Rec (2010)10 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the role of women and men in conflict prevention and resolution and in peace building**'.

3.3 **United Nations**

3.3.1 At the 54th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in March 2010 a fifteen year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly was undertaken.

3.3.2 The General Assembly marked the 15th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in a commemorative meeting during CSW on 2nd March 2010. The key message from the General

Assembly was that “gender equality and women’s empowerment is key to long-term development, economic growth and social advancement for all”.

- 3.3.3 The CSW forwarded a draft ‘*Declaration on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women*’ to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for adoption and for transmission to the General Assembly for endorsement.
- 3.3.4 The CSW also adopted a number of resolutions including a comprehensive resolution on the economic empowerment of women.
- 3.3.5 In July 2010, a new UN organisation for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment – UN Women, was established to consolidate the four existing UN bodies on women; UNIFEM, DAW, INSTRAW and OSAGI.
- 3.3.6 In September 2010, Ms. Michelle Bachelet, a former President of Chile, was appointed as the first Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women.

4. Progress on the Implementation of the National Women's Strategy in 2010

Theme One – Equalising Socio-economic Opportunity for Women

- 4.1 This broad-ranging theme relates, inter alia, to increasing female labour force participation and the advancement of women into decision-making roles, closing the gender pay gap, supporting female entrepreneurs, ensuring women and girls can reach their full potential in the educational system, providing childcare and other supports to enable women to engage in the labour market and reducing the numbers of women experiencing poverty.
- 4.2 By the end of 2010, there were 850,200 women (aged 15-64) in employment, an annual decrease of 21,400, giving a female employment rate of 55.7 per cent. An overview of the labour force in Ireland in Q2/2007 (coinciding with the launch of the National Women’s Strategy), and at the end of 2009 and 2010 shows that:
 - The number of women in the labour market (employed and unemployed) has fallen by only 3,800 over the three years while the number of men in the labour market has fallen by 89,000. This latter figure is likely to equate with the significant numbers of men who have emigrated, returned to their home country or sought work in another third country.
 - The number of women in employment has fallen by 57,100 over the three year period while the number of men in employment has fallen by 233,600.
 - Accordingly while women represented just 42.7 per cent of those in employment in 2007, they now represent 47 per cent of workers in employment.
 - The number of women who are unemployed has risen from 42,200 in 2007 to 95,600 by end 2010, an increase of 53,200, while the numbers of men still in Ireland who have become unemployed has increased by 142,700 from 60,800 to 203,500.
 - The unemployment rate for women is 10.1 per cent while the comparable rate for men is 17.3 per cent.

4.3 Equality for Women Measure

- 4.3.1 The purpose of the Equality for Women Measure is to make funding available to foster the engagement and advancement of women and gender equality in a number of economic sectors by focusing on four main strands:
 1. Access to Employment;
 2. Developing Female Entrepreneurship;
 3. Career Development for Women in Employment; and
 4. Fostering Women as Decision-Makers.

- 4.3.2 The Measure is supported by the European Social Fund under the Human Capital Investment Operational Programme (HCIOP) 2007-2013. The Measure is delivered by Pobal Ltd. on behalf of the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs.
- 4.3.3 During 2010, 184 courses were delivered under Strand 1 "Access to Employment" of the Equality for Women Measure, with some 4,800 participants. The groups involved in delivering Strand 1 during 2010 report that over 1,000 participants have already advanced into employment or further education or training.
- 4.3.4 A new phase of the Measure was rolled out in 2010 and the 43 selected projects, largely on labour market activation and entrepreneurship, will continue in 2011.

4.4 Other initiatives under Theme 1

- 4.4.1 A number of initiatives funded by the Equality for Women Measure supported women's entrepreneurship while the City and County Enterprise Boards and Enterprise Ireland were also active in supporting women in entrepreneurship.
- 4.4.1 The development of childcare services continues, both to support working parents and with a focus on the benefits of early childhood development. The number of places established under the National Childcare Investment Programme now approaches 25,000.
- 4.5 Further detail on progress made under all the key objectives in Theme 1 - Equalising Socio-economic Opportunity for Women, during 2010 can be found in Chapter 3 of this Progress Report.

5 Theme 2 – Ensuring the Wellbeing of Women

- 5.1 This Theme links a number of objectives contained in the Strategy, including work/life balance, health, promotion of physical activity, sexual and reproductive health, violence against women and human trafficking.
- 5.2 The promotion of work/life balance, and "family-friendly" policies, are regarded as key to enabling both women and men to reach their full potential in the labour market. The Progress Report contains information on a number of initiatives driven by the European Union, including enhanced provision of maternity leave for self-employed women, and new provisions on parental leave. Ireland is required to transpose both of the relevant directives by 2012.
- 5.3 **Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence and Human Trafficking**
 - 5.3.1 In 2010, Cosc, the National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence, completed its priority work on the development of a National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence for the five-year period from 2010 to 2014. In March 2010 the national strategy was approved by the Government and published.
 - 5.3.2 At the core of the approach to the strategy is action based on primary and secondary interventions. Primary intervention relates to the prevention of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence through generating greater understanding, increasing recognition and raising awareness. Secondary intervention deals with responding to the violence concerned by ensuring better provision of services to and protection for victims, improving co-ordination and dealing with the offending behaviour of perpetrators. The overall aim of the strategy is the development of a strong framework for sustainable intervention to prevent and effectively respond to domestic, sexual and gender-based violence.
 - 5.3.3 Cosc also reports on a very significant body of other work delivered by the Departments and Agencies with responsibility for addressing these issues.
 - 5.3.4 The Anti-Human Trafficking Unit also reports considerable work on aspects of the support of victims of this abuse, the victims of which are most frequently women.

5.4 Cancer care

- 5.4.1 BreastCheck screened approximately 118,846 women in 2010 while the CervicalCheck Programme Report published in 2010 reported that over 284,800 women were screened during the period 1 September 2008 to 31 August 2009 and screened approximately 250,834 women in 2010.
- 5.4.2 New arrangements have also been put in place for the delivery of all cancer services including these women's cancers and these will benefit women patients.

5.5 HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme

- 5.5.1 Statistics published by the British Department of Health in May 2010 show that the numbers of women who gave an Irish address when obtaining an abortion in Britain fell from 6,673 in 2001 to 4,422 in 2009. The estimated abortion rate (number of abortions per 1,000 women aged 15-44) has fallen from 7.5 in 2001 to 4.4 in 2009.
- 5.5.2 The Crisis Pregnancy Agency was integrated into the HSE in line with the objectives of the Health Service Reform Programme and Government policy on agency rationalisation on 1st January 2010 and is now called the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme.
- 5.5.3 In 2010, over €3 million in funding was allocated to the area of crisis pregnancy and post-termination counselling and medical check-ups by the Crisis Pregnancy Programme. There were approximately 86,000 requests for information from the Positive Options service (via SMS requests and website visits) and approximately 50,000 visits to the www.positiveoptions.ie website. In 2010, approximately 95,000 'Positive Options' materials were disseminated through crisis pregnancy counselling services, GP surgeries and colleges. The campaign was re-developed in 2010 with newly executed television, radio, poster and online advertising.

5.6 Post natal Depression

- 5.6.1 The HSE has undertaken a number of new initiatives to address and create awareness of post natal depression.
- 5.7 Further information on progress made during 2010 on all the objectives under Theme 2 - Ensuring the Wellbeing of Women, in the Strategy can be found in Chapter 4 of this Progress Report.

6. Theme 3 – Engaging Women as Equal and Active Citizens

- 6.1 The involvement of women in decision-making positions in all sectors is a prerequisite for any democratic society. This has been a key objective of EU, Council of Europe and UN policy for many years.
- 6.2 In Ireland, the low numbers of women in decision-making positions can be seen as a democratic deficit. In politics, the percentage of women in Dáil Éireann was just 13 per cent in 2010. In fact, Ireland ranks in 24th place out of the 27 EU Member States for the percentage of women in the national parliament, well below the EU average of 24 per cent. Female representation in Seanad Éireann is only slightly higher at 20 per cent.
- 6.3 An Oireachtas Sub-Committee looked at the issue of women in politics in Ireland and identified five key obstacles: childcare, cash, culture, confidence and candidate selection. The Sub-Committee made a number of proposals to increase women's representation.
- 6.4 Following a proposal by the National Women's Council of Ireland, the Monitoring Committee of the National Women's Strategy has established a Sub-Committee on Women in Decision-Making. The inaugural meeting of the Sub-Committee was held in December 2010 and the Sub-Committee will meet at regular intervals during 2011.
- 6.5 Further detail on progress made in 2010 on all of the objectives contained in the Strategy under Theme 3 - Engaging Women as Equal and Active Citizens, can be found in Chapter 5 of this Progress Report.

7. Implementation of the National Women's Strategy

- 7.1 Implementation of the Strategy is overseen by the National Women's Strategy Monitoring Committee. The Monitoring Committee is representative of key Government Departments, relevant State Agencies and the Social Partners, including the National Women's Council of Ireland. The Monitoring Committee is chaired by the Minister of State with responsibility for Equality.
- 7.2 The objectives and actions contained in the Strategy fall under the remit of various Government Departments, reflecting the "whole-of-Government" approach of the Strategy.
- 7.3 The first progress report on the implementation of the Strategy entitled '*Implementing the National Women's Strategy 2007-2016, Progress 2007/2008*' was published in August 2009, with a second progress report covering activity during 2009 entitled '*Implementing the National Women's Strategy 2007-2016, Progress 2009*' published in December 2010.
- 7.4 Further information on progress made during 2010 on the objectives contained in implementing the National Women's Strategy can be found in Chapter 6 of this Progress Report.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

1. The National Women's Strategy (NWS), launched in April 2007, is the Government's statement of priorities in relation to the advancement of women in Irish society for the period 2007-2016. It is intended to have a resonance with all women in Ireland. Its vision is

*An Ireland where all women enjoy equality with men and can achieve their full potential,
while enjoying a safe and fulfilling life.*

2. The Strategy contains twenty Key Objectives and over two hundred Planned Actions. These objectives and actions are clustered under the three key themes of
 - Equalising socio-economic opportunity for women;
 - Ensuring the wellbeing of women; and
 - Engaging women as equal and active citizens.
3. The Strategy was prepared by the Gender Equality Division of the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform (D/JELR) under the direction of an Inter-Departmental Steering Committee.
4. A Monitoring Committee, representative of the key Government Departments, relevant State Agencies and the Social Partners, including the National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCI), has been established under the chairmanship of the Minister of State with responsibility for Equality. This Committee is tasked to review progress on the Strategy's implementation. The Committee met on one occasion during 2010.

STRUCTURE OF THE 2010 PROGRESS REPORT

5. This, the third Progress Report on the National Women's Strategy has been prepared by the Gender Equality Division of the Department of Community, Equality & Gaeltacht Affairs³ (D/CEGA) in collaboration with the relevant Departments and the State Agencies which together deliver the broad range of actions encompassed in the Strategy. The Report gives an overview of progress made in implementing the Objectives contained in the Strategy during 2010. Earlier reports are available on the Department of Justice and Equality website (www.justice.ie).
6. The present chapter updates some of the key indicators which were included in the Strategy and includes a short overview of the key issues which have arisen in relation to gender equality and the advancement of women.
7. Chapter 2 outlines some of the developments which have taken place in an international context during 2010, including the work of the multi-lateral organisations: the European Union, the Council of Europe and the United Nations.
8. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 respectively look at progress by objective under each of the three key themes identified in the Strategy: equalising socio-economic opportunity; ensuring women's wellbeing and engaging women as equal and active citizens. These chapters include material supplied by the key Government Departments and State Agencies and incorporate relevant national and international statistics and contextual comment prepared by the Gender Equality Division, D/CEGA.
9. Chapter 6 summarises progress on practical issues in relation to the mainstreaming of gender equality as a key element for the achievement of de facto gender equality.

³ Since the General Election in February 2011, the Equality brief has returned to the Department of Justice and Equality. See Postscript for further information.

OVERVIEW OF KEY INDICATORS DURING 2010

10. Table 1 below shows an update of the key indicators which were included in the Strategy.

TABLE 1
UPDATE OF KEY INDICATORS ON WOMEN 1971 – 2010

	1971	1991	2007	2008	2009	2010
Number of women in population*	1,482,488	1,772,301	2,118,677	2,215,800	2,241,600	2,254,700
Number of marriages**	20,788	16,859	22,544	22,243	21,541	20,683
Rate per 1,000	7.1	4.8	5.2	5.0	4.8	7.0
Average age of woman on marriage	25.1	25.8	31.1	31.1	31.3	31.3
Number of births**	64,382	52,690	70,620	75,065	74,278	73,795
Birth rate per 1,000	21.9	15	16.3	17.0	16.7	17.2
Extra marital births	1,709	8,766	23,170	24,844	24,532	24,820
Extra marital births as % of total births	2.7	16.6	32.8	33.1	33.0	33.6
Total fertility rate	3.5	2.1	2.03	2.1	2.1	2.1
Percentage of women aged over 15 in the labour force	28.0	32.9	54.4	53.9	53.2	52.9
Percentage of married women in the labour force	8.0	26.9	54.1	54.6	54.1	54.2

Source : Central Statistics Office, various

Notes : * CSO Estimate for population 2008, 2009, 2010

** 2010 : estimated figure based on extrapolation of 2009 data

11. Table 1 shows that the number of women in the population continues to increase, as do all of the “childbirth related” statistics, including the fertility rate which is now among the highest in Europe. The percentage of women aged over 15 in the labour force was just under 53% in 2010, having peaked at 54.4% in 2007. This is discussed further in Chapter 3.

TABLE 2
SELECTED CENSUS STATISTICS IN RELATION TO WOMEN – 2002 AND 2006 AND POPULATION ESTIMATES 2010

	2002	2006	% Increase/ (Decrease)	Population Estimates 2010	% Increase/ (Decrease) on 2006 figures
Number of Women in Ireland	1,971,039	2,118,677	+7.4%	2,254,700	+6.4%
Number of Women born outside Ireland	201,107	294,297	+46.3%	434,000	+47%
Percentage of women born outside Ireland	10.2%	13.9%	-	19.2%	
Women/Girls in Ireland by Age Group					
0 – 14	403,384	421,405	+4.5%	467,400	+10.9%
15 – 24	315,817	311,725	(-1.3%)	276,600	(-11.3%)
25 – 44	591,951	663,885	+12.2%	722,200	+8.8%
45 – 64	413,041	460,831	+11.6%	508,100	+10.3%
65 and over	246,846	260,831	+5.7%	280,100	+7.4%

12. The publication of the detailed volumes of the 2006 Census of Population during 2007 and 2008 has increased the contemporary picture of women in Ireland. Table 2 above gives a number of statistics drawn from the census, offering a comparison with the statistics from the 2002 census. Table 2 also includes some preliminary 2010 statistics on the number of women in the population by age group and a comparison with the 2006 Census figures.

13. The total number of women in the country had grown by 7.4 per cent over the four years since the 2002 Census. The CSO *Population and Migration Estimates*, which was released in September 2010, with a reference period of April 2010, shows that the number of women in the population continues to rise steadily. Between 2006 (the Census year) and 2010 it is estimated that the number of women in the population increased by over 6.4 per cent or 136,023 women. This represents an increase of 3 per cent in the population of Irish women.

14. This population growth was most concentrated in the cohorts of women most likely to be in employment – there was growth of some 12 per cent in the numbers aged between 25 and 64,

illustrating a significant increase in the potential female labour force. However there was a decline in the age group 20 – 24 years and this will have a negative impact on the labour market over the coming years.

15. Significantly, the CSO forecast also shows that between 2006 and 2010 the greatest increase in the female population occurred in the number of women aged 30-34 years. This cohort increased by over 11.2 per cent or 19,200 women. Logically, one could assert that the numbers of women in the labour market would also have increased significantly over this period. This has impacted on employment rates.
16. The population of women born outside Ireland who migrated to Ireland grew by over 46 per cent between the census periods and is estimated to have increased by a further 47% (or some 139,000 women) since 2006. Emigration began to grow during this period and female emigration is estimated to have numbered about 89,300 in the same period, giving net immigration for women since Census 2006 of some 50,000. This contrasts with male migration patterns. Male immigration since census 2006 numbered 140,000, just slightly above the female level, but male migration is estimated at 131,000, giving a net increase of only 10,000 men.
17. Census statistics on marital status also show a significant increase in the numbers of women who are described as single, separated, divorced or widowed. However this does not take account of those who are living with a partner and it is necessary to review the Census volume on living arrangements to determine the numbers of women who are head of a household. Including women living alone, there is an increase of almost 18 per cent in the number of female-led households in the four year inter-censal period, compared with an overall increase of just 14 per cent in the number of private households.
18. The results of the 2011 Census, when available, will provide a greater opportunity for statistical analysis and comparison.

CHANGES IN THE OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

19. The economic downturn began to manifest itself in the second quarter of 2008 and gathered momentum thereafter. Much has been written about its impact on economic growth, employment and public services.
20. While the early stages of the downturn in Ireland affected the employment status of the male population more sharply than the female labour force, indicators at the end of 2008 showed that the numbers of women becoming unemployed was beginning to increase. This was reflected in the employment rate for women aged 15 to 64 in the labour force (the Lisbon target set at 60 %) which fell to 59 per cent in Quarter 4 of 2008, or 1 percentage point below the European Council target, after five successive quarters above the target level. The Irish rate had peaked at 61.5 per cent (Q3/2007). This downward trend continued in 2009 with the female employment rate falling to 57% in Quarter 4 2009. The female employment rate in Quarter 4 2010 was 55.7%. However, it is also important to note that the increase in the number of women in the population in Ireland over this period, referenced at paragraphs 13 to 16 above, will have had an impact on the measurement of the employment rate.
21. The European Union and in particular the Commissioner with responsibility for Employment spoke at length and on a number of occasions of the need to maintain a focus on gender equality and gender issues during the economic downturn to ensure that the momentum towards women's increased labour market participation is not lost and to ensure that the different impacts on men and women are taken into account when Member States are planning and implementing their austerity measures. This is reiterated in the Europe 2020 Strategy, published in 2010.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN IMPLEMENTING THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S STRATEGY 2010

22. This Report shows that progress has been made across all Government Departments and Agencies to implement the National Women's Strategy during 2010. However, there are still significant deficits between women and men in many important sectors, particularly in decision-making roles, both in economic and political fields.

CHAPTER 2

GENDER EQUALITY – THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION

INTRODUCTION

1. The European Union and all of the key multi-lateral bodies place considerable emphasis on gender equality. The concept of gender equality has been enshrined in EU legislation since the foundation of the EU in 1958 while the Council of Europe and the United Nations have addressed gender equality since their foundation in the 1940s. Each body continues to play a significant role in promoting gender equality.

THE EUROPEAN UNION - PRESIDENCY ACTIVITIES ON GENDER

2. Both the Commission and its High Level Group on Gender Mainstreaming (representative of all Member States at official level) collaborate with each EU Presidency country to advance a programme of activities in relation to gender equality. This will usually include the organisation of a Ministerial Conference and an Informal Ministerial Council. It will also frequently result in a major research report and a series of Agreed Conclusions which are submitted to the Employment, Social Protection, Health and Consumer Affairs (ESPHCA) Council for final decision.
3. The appointment of the new European Commission in February 2010 led to some structural changes in the Commission. Responsibility for gender equality now rests with the Commissioner for Justice, Fundamental Rights and Citizenship and Ms Viviane Reding, the three term Luxembourgish Commission Vice-President, has taken responsibility for this dossier. However, the staff of the Gender Equality Directorate remained attached to DG Emploi, the Employment and Social Affairs Directorate General until early 2011.
4. During 2010, each Presidency undertook an active programme on gender equality with Spain also fulfilling a key role in relation to the Beijing +15 Review at the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). The Council of Ministers of the European Union is the principal decision-making institution in the EU. Council Conclusions relating to gender equality which were adopted at the EPSCA Councils during 2010 were:

Council Conclusions on – The Eradication of Violence against Women in the European Union

5. The Spanish Presidency oversaw the adoption of Council Conclusions on 'The Eradication of Violence against Women in the European Union' in March 2010. Member States are urged:
 - To update or develop national strategies for tackling violence against women in a comprehensive way and to ensure that the role of men is taken into account, where appropriate, in strategies, action plans and other measures aimed at reducing and eradicating violence against women;
 - To ensure that acts of violence against women are prohibited by law and that their perpetrators are prosecuted by the courts, in accordance with national legislation;
 - To identify and remedy any shortcomings in the protection of women who are victims of violence in any form, and to ensure that there is no justification of violence on the grounds of customs, traditions or religious considerations
 - To ensure protection and support for children living in environments where women are subjected to violence;
 - In conjunction with the European Commission, to carry out awareness-raising, education and training campaigns to combat discriminatory cultural norms, and tackle the prevalent sexist stereotypes and social stigmatisation which legitimise and perpetuate violence against women.

Council Conclusions on – Supporting the implementation of the European Commission’s Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015

6. The Belgian Presidency oversaw the adoption of Council Conclusions to ESPHCA Council in December 2010 on 'Supporting the implementation of the European Commission’s Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015'.
7. The Council Conclusions were prepared following the launch by the European Commission of its Strategy for equality between women and men 2010-2015 in September 2010 (further information on this Strategy can be found at page 13 below). Member States are called on:
 - To affirm their commitments in the five priority areas for action, including by addressing the horizontal issues set out in the European Commission's Strategy for equality between women and men;
 - To ensure that those commitments are effectively followed through in their national policies and, if appropriate, in their National Reform Programmes in the context of the implementation of the Europe 2020 Strategy;
 - To improve the follow-up of the European Pact for Gender Equality by making full use of the existing mechanisms, structures and indicators; and
 - To reflect these commitments in the European Pact for Gender Equality, and to support its revision accordingly.

Council Conclusions on – Strengthening the commitment and stepping up action to close the gender pay gap, and review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action

8. In the context of the follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action, adopted during the United Nations World Conference on Women in 1995, the Belgian Presidency prepared a set of draft Council Conclusions on the gender pay gap.
9. The draft Council Conclusions call on the Member States and the Commission, in accordance with their respective competences, to adopt or pursue a comprehensive set of measures to tackle the full range of causes of the gender pay gap linked to labour market inequalities between women and men.

In particular the Member States are invited to examine the following measures:

- promotion of pay transparency;
 - promotion of the neutral evaluation and classification of jobs;
 - improvement of the quality of employment;
 - the elimination of vertical segregation in the labour market, including through positive action measures aiming to improve gender balance in decision-making positions;
 - the elimination of horizontal segregation in the labour market by combating gender stereotypes;
 - improvements in reconciling work, family and private life for both women and men; and
 - the promotion of appropriate policies on low pay.
10. The European Council was also invited to take note of an evaluation report prepared by the Belgian Presidency on *'The gender pay gap in the Member States of the European Union: quantitative and qualitative indicators'*.

Other Presidency Actions in 2010

11. EU Presidency Conferences and/or Informal Councils on Gender Equality held during 2010 focused on the following topics:

European Women's Forum: Beijing + 15, Cadiz, 4/5 February 2010

- The Spanish Presidency held a meeting of the European Women's Forum in Cadiz on 4/5 February 2010.
- The forum was attended by Ministers or their representatives from all EU governments, the European Parliament, UNIFEM and leading Spanish and EU women's NGOs.
- An EU report was presented on compliance with the strategic objectives and twelve critical areas of concern identified in the Beijing Platform for Action, established during the Fourth Women's World Conference in Beijing in 1995.

European Women in Power Summit, Cadiz, 3 February 2010

- The Spanish Presidency on a joint UK/Spanish initiative held the second European Women in Power Summit in Cadiz on 3 February 2010, the first such Summit having been held in Athens in 1992.
- The Summit was attended by female Ministers and high ranking politicians from Member States and was jointly hosted by the Spanish Minister for Equality and the Spanish First Deputy Prime Minister.
- A political statement, the Declaration of Cadiz, was adopted during the summit entitled '*Towards successful and sustainable societies*'.

Ministerial Conference and Informal Meeting of Ministers for Gender Equality, Valencia, 25/26 March 2010

- The Spanish Presidency held a Ministerial Conference and Informal Meeting of Ministers for Gender Equality in Valencia on 25/26 March 2010 on '*Equality between Women and Men as the Basis for Growth and Employment*'. The Irish Minister with responsibility for Equality issues attended.
- At the Informal Meeting of Ministers, the Trio Presidency (Spain, Belgium and Hungary) presented a joint Declaration on Equality between Women and Men. The Declaration notes that in the current economic and financial crisis the European Union cannot afford to ignore the human capital, capacity and talent of women. The proposals in the Declaration by the Trio Presidency to Member States include:
 - To give maximum priority to mainstreaming the principle of gender equality throughout all European Union policies;
 - To fight against gender stereotypes in all areas, especially in the fields of education, professional training, science and technology as well as in the media, ensuring that professional decisions are not made on the basis of gender stereotypes;
 - To make special efforts to improve the situation of women in the labour market, increasing female employment rates, quality of work and the quality of professional career, including transitions and presence of women in positions of responsibility while closing the gender pay gap and the existing sectoral and occupational segregation; and
 - To intensify efforts to make progress in the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men in the private life, especially in terms of childcare and other caretaking tasks by promoting, in particular, paternity leave.
- At the Ministerial Conference, the European Commission presented its Report '*More women in senior positions – key to economic stability and growth*'.

European Women Ministers' Summit on Violence against Women, Brussels, 24 November 2010

- Following on from the Women in Power Summit in February 2010, the Belgian Presidency hosted the Third European Summit in Brussels on 24 November 2010. This was devoted to combating

violence against women and was held on the eve of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women. The Brussels Declaration '*Towards a coherent, effective and global European policy to combat violence against women*', a political statement, was adopted during the summit.

Ministerial Conference on Violence against Women

- The European Commission organised a Conference on Violence against Women on 25/26 November 2010 to follow the European Summit. The Conference brought together experts, academics, NGOs and international organisations active in the field of combating violence against women. Also in attendance were: Ms. Viviane Reding, EU Commissioner for Justice, Citizenship and Fundamental Rights, Minister Milquet, Belgian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Employment and Equal Opportunities, and Ms. Rashida Manjoo, UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences.
- The Conference focused on:
 - The origins, causes and social aspects of Violence against Women;
 - The legal aspects in combating Violence against Women;
 - Special forms of Violence against Women, including female genital mutilation (FGM); and
 - How to fight Violence against Women – Towards an EU Strategy.

A Strengthened Commitment to Equality between Women and Men: A Women's Charter

- A Women's Charter was presented by the European Commission as a political declaration on the occasion of International Women's Day in March 2010.
- The Charter sets out five key areas for action and commits the European Commission to building a gender perspective into all its policies for the next five years while taking specific measures to promote equality. It aims to promote:
 - Equality in the labour market and equal economic independence for women and men, namely through the Europe 2020 strategy;
 - Equal pay for equal work and work of equal value by working with Member States to reduce significantly the gender pay gap over the next five years;
 - Equality in decision-making through EU incentive measures;
 - Dignity, integrity and an end to gender-based violence through a comprehensive policy framework; and
 - Gender equality beyond the EU by pursuing the issue in external relations and with international organisations.
- The full text of *A Women's Charter* can be found at Appendix I.

European Commission Strategy for Equality between women and men 2010-2015

12. The European Commission's new ***Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015*** was adopted on 21 September 2010. The Strategy follows on from the Commission's ***Roadmap for Equality between women and men 2006-2010***.
13. The new Strategy identifies five priority areas for action:
 - equal economic independence;
 - equal pay for equal work or work of equal value;
 - equality in decision-making;
 - dignity, integrity and an end to gender-based violence; and

- gender equality in external actions.
14. A sixth area concerns horizontal issues relating to gender roles, legislation, governance and tools for gender equality. The Strategy includes key actions of the European Commission for all six areas. The publication of this Strategy will see a strengthening of regular dialogue on the achievement of de facto gender equality among the EU Institutions at the highest levels, including talks between Council, Commission and Parliament on an annual basis. This will strengthen the focus on the attainment of gender equality in the work of all institutions.

Europe 2020 Strategy

15. ***Europe 2020*** is the European Union's economic growth strategy for the coming decade. The Strategy was published in June 2010, following its adoption by the European Council. Its goal is to ensure that the EU develops as a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy. The Union sets five ambitious objectives on employment, innovation, education, social inclusion and climate energy, to be reached by 2020. Each Member State will adopt its own national targets in each of these areas, in the context of the National Reform Programmes and progress on the achievement of these targets will be monitored closely by the European Commission.

16. The ***Europe 2020 Strategy*** promotes inclusive growth and the need for increased economic engagement of women, noting that:

"Inclusive growth means empowering people through high levels of employment, investing in skills, fighting poverty and modernising labour markets, training and social protection systems so as to help people anticipate and manage change and build a cohesive society..."

Europe needs to make full use of its labour potential to face the challenges of an ageing population and rising global competition, policies to promote gender equality will be needed to increase labour force participation thus adding to growth and social inclusion".

17. Member States are required to prepare their National Reform Programmes to address the key aims of the Strategy, which, in respect of gender and women, includes:

- Achieving an employment rate of 75 per cent for men and for women, aged 20-64, by 2020;
- Increasing the numbers of women in scientific research;
- Increasing the numbers of women in managerial positions in scientific research.

European Commission Annual Report on Equality between Women and Men

18. The European Commission produces an annual report on gender equality between women and men for the Spring European Council. The report includes a statistical annex which gives an overview of the situation of women and men in Europe and allows for comparison between Member States in relation to gender equality.

19. In March 2011, the European Commission presented its first annual report after the adoption of the Europe 2020 Strategy and the Commission's Strategy for Equality between Women and Men 2010-2015. The Report is structured around the five priority areas identified in the Strategy and in the Women's Charter, which was adopted by the Commission on 5 March 2010.

20. The Commission report outlines recent developments in gender equality in the EU and presents statistics on the five priority areas identified in the Commission's Strategy, namely: equal economic independence; equal pay for equal work or work of equal value; equality in decision-making; dignity, integrity and an end to gender-based violence; and gender equality outside of the EU. The Report also highlights recent new developments in the Member States. The Report notes that from next year the annual report will focus on a particular theme.

European Union - Revisions to EU Family-Friendly Legislation

Self-Employed Gender Equal Treatment Directive – Council Directive 2010/41/EU on the application of the principle of equal treatment between men and women engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Directive 86/613/EEC.

21. This Directive aims to change the Community legal framework to provide a period of maternity leave for self-employed women and to recognise the contribution of assisting spouses to the family business by providing them with social protection equivalent to that of their self-employed partners. It provides for 14 weeks maternity leave for female self-employed workers and assisting spouses.
22. The Directive was published in July 2010. Ireland has until 5 August 2012 to transpose the Directive.

Revised Parental Leave Directive – Council Directive 2010/18/EU

23. A revised framework agreement on parental leave was concluded between the European Social Partners (which included ICTU and IBEC) in June 2009. This led to a proposal from the European Commission to the European Council to repeal existing legislation in this area. The new legislation was published in March 2010 and Member States are required to transpose it within two years.
24. The main elements are as follows:
 - The duration of Parental Leave will now be for 4 months. This was previously 3 months. Up to 3 of the 4 months will be transferable under this agreement.
 - It requires Member States to assess the need to adjust conditions for access and modalities of application of Parental Leave to the needs of parents of children with either a disability or long-term illness.
 - It confers the right on parents returning to work from Parental Leave to seek changes to their working hours or the structure of same. An employer is now legally obliged to consider the request but not obliged to grant this.
 - It provides for an assessment of the needs for additional measures to address specific needs in relation to adoptive parents.
25. Some positive aspects of the proposal include the balancing of gender responsibilities and gender equality. The fact that one month is non-transferable may encourage fathers to avail of Parental Leave while mothers may be induced to remain in the workforce.
26. The transposition of the proposed Directive into Irish law will require an amendment to the existing Parental Leave Acts, 1998 and 2006, and work has commenced on this process. Ireland's current statutory Parental Leave entitlement is 14 weeks per parent, per child and it is unpaid.

EU Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men

27. The EU Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men is composed of representatives from Member States Government Departments, national bodies responsible for equal opportunities, employers' organisations at Community level, employees' organisations at Community level and observers such as the European Women's Lobby and others. The Advisory Committee assists the European Commission in formulating and implementing Community measures aimed at promoting equal opportunities for men and women. The Committee also encourages the continuous exchange of information and experience gained on policies and measures undertaken in relevant fields between the Member States and the various other actors. The Advisory Committee prepares opinions at the request of the EU Commission and also delivers opinions on its own initiative. The Advisory Committee adopted three Opinions during 2010.

Opinion on flexible and part-time working arrangements and the gender dimension of the labour market

- The Opinion:
 - Examines the positive and negative aspects of both flexible and part-time working arrangements with regard to gender equality; and
 - Promotes greater use of flexible working arrangements at all levels of employment and amongst both women and men, with a particular focus on flexible working in quality, skilled employment.

Opinion on breaking gender stereotypes in the media

- The Opinion proposes measures for the promotion of a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women and men in the media and in new technologies of communication.
- The Opinion also aims to promote equal opportunities and working conditions for women and men working in all areas of the media sector, as well as to increase participation and access to expression and decision-making for women in and throughout the media.

Opinion on an EU Strategy on Violence against Women and Girls

- The Opinion provides a definition and a set of recommendations to inform the EU Strategy on Violence against Women and Girls.
- The definition recommended in the Opinion is as follows:

“Violence against women is to be understood as any act of gender-based violence, which results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion, or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- a. *Violence occurring in the family or domestic unit, including, inter-alia, physical or mental aggression, emotional and psychological abuse, rape and sexual abuse, incest, rape between spouses, regular or occasional partners, crimes committed in the name of honour, female genital and sexual mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, such as forced marriages;*
- b. *Violence occurring within the general community, including, inter-alia, rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in institutions or elsewhere, trafficking in women for the purposes of sexual exploitation and economic exploitation and sex tourism;*
- c. *Violence perpetrated or condoned by the state or its officials;*
- d. *Violation of the human rights of women in situations of armed conflict, in particular the taking of hostages, forced displacement, systematic rape, sexual slavery, forced pregnancy, and trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation and economic exploitation”.*

Other EU Matters

The European Institute for Gender Equality

- The **European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)** is a European agency created to support the Member States and the European Union in their efforts to promote gender equality, to fight gender discrimination and to raise awareness about gender issues. The proposal for its establishment was reactivated during the 2004 Irish Presidency.
- The tasks of the Institute are:
 1. To collect and analyse comparable data on gender issues;

2. To develop methodological tools, in particular for the integration of the gender dimension in all policy areas;
 3. To facilitate the exchange of best practices and dialogue among stakeholders, and to raise awareness among EU citizens.
- The Management Board of the newly established European Gender Institute met for the first time in 2007 and has met regularly since. The Board includes representatives of 18 of the 27 Member States on a three year rotational basis. A new Board was appointed in June 2010. Ireland is not currently a member of the Board.
 - All Member States are represented on the Experts' Forum, the Institute's advisory body, its principal function is to provide expertise and disseminate knowledge and awareness in the field of gender equality.
 - The Director was appointed to the Institute in early 2009. The Gender Institute opened its new premises in Vilnius, Lithuania, in December 2009 and moved from its temporary premises in Brussels to Vilnius in June 2010. The budget for the Institute for the period 2007-2013 is €52.5 million. The Institute employed approximately thirty staff in 2010.
 - To celebrate International Women's Day on 8th March 2010, the EIGE announced the launch of its future "**Women of Europe**" resource pool. This is an ongoing project which contains information about women from all over Europe acting as role models and sources of inspiration for others. A woman can nominate herself or can be nominated based on any of the following:
 - How the nominee/nominator believes she/nominee has managed to break stereotypes about women.
 - How the nominee/nominator believes she/nominee achieved visibility and recognition by way of her actions.
 - How the nominee/nominator believes she/nominee has contributed to her society and to other women in particular.
 - Every year, beginning in 2011, twelve women from the resource pool will be chosen to feature in the "**Women Inspiring Europe**" Calendar.
 - The Mid-Term Work Programme for the Institute for the period 2010 - 2012 was adopted in April 2010. The focal areas identified in the work programme are as follows:
 - Completing the administrative and operational set up of the Institute;
 - Support to the research and policy work of the EU Institutions and the Member States;
 - Thematic or priority areas – including the concept of an EU Gender Equality Index to analyse gender gaps and to give the Member States a tool to encourage gender equality work;
 - Awareness-raising, networking and communication;
 - Dialogue and partnership.
 - The Institute hosted an International Seminar in November 2010 entitled '*Joining Efforts Towards Gender Equality in the EU 2010-2015*' to foster the debate on EIGE's joint work with different partners, from EU Agencies and other Institutions, to Member States' representatives, namely National Bodies for Gender Equality and National Statistics Offices regarding the implementation of the European Commission's Strategy for Equality between women and men 2010-2015.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

- The Council of Europe has 47 member countries. 2009 represented the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the Council of Europe. The Council of Europe seeks to develop throughout Europe common and democratic principles based on the European Convention on Human Rights and other reference texts on the protection of individuals.

- The 7th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Equality between Women and Men was held in Baku, Azerbaijan, on 24/25 May 2010. The theme of the Conference was “*Bridging the gap between de jure and de facto equality to achieve real gender equality*”. A Resolution was adopted on this topic, along with an Action Plan entitled “*Taking up the challenge of the achievement of de jure and de facto gender equality*”.
- In September 2010, the Committee of Ministers decided that this Resolution and Action Plan would be taken into account in the future work of the Council of Europe in the area of gender equality.
- In July 2010, the Council of Europe Committee of Ministers adopted a recommendation on the role of women and men in conflict resolution and peace building ‘**Recommendation CM/Rec (2010)10 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the role of women and men in conflict prevention and resolution and in peace building**’, following a Parliamentary Assembly recommendation.
- The Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly made a number of recommendations concerning gender equality during 2010 which were forwarded to the Committee of Ministers for consideration, including:
 - “Increasing women’s representation in politics through the electoral system” – PACE Rec 1899 (2010);
 - “The wage gap between women and men” – PACE Rec 1907 (2010);
 - “Associating women in the prevention and the solution of unresolved conflicts in Europe” – PACE Rec 1909 (2010);
 - “Women and the economic and financial crisis” – PACE Rec 1911 (2010).

Council of Europe Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men (CDEG)

- Within the context of its Human Rights Division, the Council of Europe (CoE) established a Steering Committee for Equality between Women and Men which meets twice a year. Ireland is now represented on the Bureau for the Steering Committee. The Bureau is tasked with the preparation of the work of the full Committee.
- The following is a summary of the work which was undertaken by CDEG during 2010:
- At its 44th Meeting on 23rd May 2010, in Baku, Azerbaijan, the CDEG:
 - Approved the draft Resolution and the draft Action Plan to be adopted by the Conference of Ministers, and finalised the programme arrangements for the Conference;
 - Chose the topic of “migrant women and the economy” for the 10th Meeting of the Informal Network on Gender Mainstreaming to be held in Strasbourg in September 2010;
 - Discussed and approved new draft Terms of Reference for the CDEG to be submitted to the Committee of Ministers for adoption.
- At its 45th Meeting on 8-10 December 2010, the CDEG:
 - Decided on its priority areas for action during 2011, namely:
 - Preparation of a recommendation on migrant women and girls, including Roma women;
 - The drafting of a handbook on gender stereotypes in the media;
 - Research into stereotypes in education; and
 - Research into women and girls discriminated against on grounds of their sexual orientation or gender identity and transgender persons, with a view to drafting guidelines;
 - Took note of the invitation from the Netherlands to host the 8th Council of Europe Conference of Ministers with responsibility for Equality between Women and Men in 2013;

- Agreed to a proposal by the CDEG Bureau to develop the qualitative aspect of the information provided by member states in the questionnaire on the implementation of Recommendation *Rec(2003)3 on the balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making* and agreed to include a question on economic decision-making;
- Was informed of the latest preparations for the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence;
- Decided to organise a side event for the 55th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women in 2011 on “Combating gender stereotypes in education”, in conjunction with the Turkish authorities under their Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe.

Council of Europe work on Violence against Women and Domestic Violence

- The Deputies of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe approved the establishment of the Ad hoc Committee on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (CAHVIO) at their 1044th meeting in December 2008. The work of this Committee continued during 2010 with Ireland represented in the negotiations by Cosc Division, D/Justice and Law Reform and by end 2010 the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence was almost completed.
- Once the final draft text has been adopted, the convention will be submitted to the Parliamentary Assembly for opinion and thereafter to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe for adoption. It is anticipated that the Convention will be adopted during the first half of 2011.⁴

UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN – 54th SESSION 2010

- From 1-12 March 2010, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) undertook a fifteen-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.
- The General Assembly marked the 15th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in a commemorative meeting during CSW on 2nd March 2010. The key message from the General Assembly was that “gender equality and women’s empowerment is key to long-term development, economic growth and social advancement for all”.
- The CSW forwarded a draft decision ‘***Declaration on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women***’ to the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for adoption and for transmission to the General Assembly for endorsement.
- In the Declaration, the representatives of the Governments’ participating at the 54th session of the CSW:
 1. *Reaffirm* the Beijing Declaration¹ and Platform for Action,² the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly³ and the declaration of the Commission on the Status of Women on the tenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women;
 2. *Welcome* the progress made thus far towards achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women, stress that challenges and obstacles remain in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and, in this regard, pledge to undertake further action to ensure their full and accelerated implementation;

⁴ Although it post-dates the reference period for this Progress Report, on 7th April 2011, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.

3. *Emphasize* that the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is essential to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and stress the need to ensure the integration of a gender perspective in the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on accelerating progress towards the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals by 2015;

4. *Recognize* that the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the fulfillment of the obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women are mutually reinforcing in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women;

5. *Call upon* the United Nations system, international and regional organizations and all sectors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, as well as all women and men, to fully commit themselves and intensify their contributions to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

- The following Resolutions were agreed and submitted to ECOSOC where they were adopted.
 - *54/1 Declaration on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women;*
 - *54/2 Women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS;*
 - *54/3 Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts;*
 - *54/4 Women's economic empowerment;*
 - *54/5 Eliminating maternal mortality and morbidity through the empowerment of women;*
 - *54/6 Strengthening the institutional arrangements of the United Nations for support of gender equality and the empowerment of women by consolidating the four existing offices into a composite entity;*
 - *54/7 Ending female genital mutilation.*
- The then Minister of State for Equality, Disability and Mental Health, Mr. John Moloney, TD attended the Commission on the Status of Women and delivered a Statement on behalf of Ireland. The Irish Permanent Mission to the United Nations hosts a side event on Maternal Mortality, chaired by HE Ambassador Anne Anderson with the participation of former President Mary Robinson, Ms Melanie Verveer (President Obama's Ambassador at Large on Women's Affairs), Ministers from two Irish Aid partner countries (Tanzania and Sierra Leone) and Minister Moloney.
- Resolution 54/4 was the most relevant to the Gender Equality sector in Ireland while the remaining resolutions were of interest to colleagues from Department of Foreign Affairs and Irish Aid.
- **Resolution 54/4 on Women's economic empowerment**, notes that women's economic empowerment is crucial in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and contributes to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.
- The Resolution recognises that recovery measures should take into account the negative impact of the financial and economic crisis on women and men and should integrate gender equality concerns in all response measures. The Resolution also notes that women's economic empowerment is a key factor that contributes to sustainable economic development.
- The Resolution calls on States, inter alia:
 - To incorporate gender perspectives into social and economic policies;

- To adopt and apply a systematic approach across all areas and at all levels in order to accelerate women's full participation in economic decision-making at all levels and ensure the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the implementation and evaluation of economic and development policies;
- To develop and implement gender-sensitive policies and programmes aimed at promoting women's economic empowerment, including through enhancing their access to full and productive employment and decent work for all and to equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, and at supporting women's technical, managerial and entrepreneurial capacities and initiatives, with the aim of ensuring sustainable and adequate income generation and empowering women as equal partners with men in these fields;
- To fulfil their commitments to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and to ensure the equal access of women and girls to education for all; and
- To adopt and apply effective measures, including legislative measures, to ensure the application of the principle of equal remuneration for men and women workers for equal work or work of equal value, to promote equality of opportunity and treatment among men and women in respect of employment and occupation, and to enable persons with family responsibilities who are engaged or wish to engage in employment to be able to do so.

UN WOMEN

- In July 2010, a new UN organisation for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment – UN Women, was established to consolidate the four existing UN bodies on women: the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the International Training and Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI).
- The Irish Permanent Mission in the UN and Irish Aid were to the forefront in advocating for the establishment of this new organisation. Ireland played an active role in the negotiations to agree the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 64/289 for the establishment of this new Gender Entity.
- The main roles of UN Women are:
 - To support inter-governmental bodies, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, in their formulation of policies, global standards and norms.
 - To help Member States to implement these standards, standing ready to provide suitable technical and financial support to those countries that request it, and to forge effective partnerships with civil society.
 - To hold the UN system accountable for its own commitments on gender equality, including regular monitoring of system-wide progress.
- In September 2010, the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, announced the appointment of Ms. Michelle Bachelet as the first Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. Ms. Bachelet was President of Chile from 2006 to 2010.

CHAPTER 3

THEME ONE - EQUALISING SOCIO-ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY FOR WOMEN

INTRODUCTION

1. This key theme of the National Women's Strategy aims to equalise socio-economic opportunity for women by addressing their employment status, putting in place measures to overcome poverty which is more prevalent among women and looking at issues such as caring services which support the economic engagement of women.

Objective 1-A
To increase the participation of women in the labour force

CONTEXT

2. Table 3 below updates headline statistics on employment rates for women in Ireland originally contained in the Strategy. Statistics on average hourly earnings by sex are no longer available and expanded information on the numbers of men and women in employment is given in a later table.

TABLE 3
WOMEN IN EMPLOYMENT AND ENTERPRISE – SOME HEADLINE STATISTICS

	MALE	FEMALE
Employment Rate 1994	65.9%	40.1%
Employment Rate 2006 (Q4) (ILO Definition)	77.7%	59.6%
Employment Rate 2008 (Q4) (ILO Definition)	72.6%	59.0%
Employment Rate 2009 (Q4) (ILO Definition)	66.5%	57.6%
Employment Rate 2010 (Q4) (ILO Definition)	63.1%	55.7%

3. The statistics in Table 3 above also relate to the targets for female employment contained in the EU Lisbon Strategy for Economic Competitiveness and Growth which aimed to see that the employment rate for women aged 15 to 64 years would be 60 per cent by 2010. Ireland actually exceeded this target in 2007 and early in 2008 but a combination of the economic downturn and a continuing increase in the baseline population means that the employment rate for women in the target group has now fallen to 55.7 per cent.

TABLE 4
EMPLOYMENT RATES (WOMEN AND MEN AGED 15-64) IN EU MEMBER STATES – 2009

	Employment Rate		Gender Gap*	Rank by Gender Gap
	Women	Men		
	%	%	%	
Top Three				
Denmark	73.1	78.3	5.2	6
Netherlands	71.5	82.4	10.9	15
Sweden	70.2	74.2	4.0	5
IRELAND (16th)	57.8	67.3	9.5	12
EU – 27 Average	58.6	70.7	12.1	-
Bottom Three				
Greece	48.9	73.5	24.6	26
Italy	46.4	68.6	22.2	25
Malta	37.7	71.5	33.8	27

Source: CSO Women and Men in Ireland 2010

** Difference in rates between men and women*

4. Table 4 above looks at trends in relation to employment for women in selected EU States. The table summarises the three Member States with the highest and the three Member States with the lowest employment rates for women (women aged 15 to 64 only). Comparative data for men are included as are the Irish and EU mean data.

5. Ireland ranked sixteenth for the employment rate for women in 2009 (in 2007, Ireland was ranked fourteenth with a female employment rate of 60.3 per cent). Despite previously being ranked the tenth highest among the 27 EU Member States in 2008, the employment rate for men in Ireland is now ranked eighteenth and accordingly the absolute gap between women and men has narrowed and is now ranked at 12th (improved from 19th).
6. To date, the impact of the economic downturn has affected the employment of the two sexes to differing extents. Table 5 below gives an overview of the labour force in Ireland in Q2/2007 (coinciding with the launch of the National Women's Strategy), and at the end of 2009 and 2010.

TABLE 5
PERSONS AGED 15 YEARS AND OVER CLASSIFIED BY SEX AND ILO ECONOMIC STATUS 2007 - 2010

	FEMALES (000)			MALES (000)		
	A	B	C	D	E	F
	Q2/2007	Q4/2009	Q4/2010	Q2/2007	Q4/2009	Q4/2010
In Labour Force	949.5	949.9	945.8	1267.5	1,205.3	1176.4
In Employment	907.3	871.6	850.2	1206.6	1,016.2	973.0
Full Time	613.0	569.9	547.1	1121.2	898.3	853.0
Part-Time	294.2	301.6	303.1	82.4	117.8	120.0
Unemployed	42.2	78.4	95.6	60.8	189.1	203.5
Not In Labour Force	791.2	837.2	843.7	454.4	528.6	546.2
Total aged 15 Or Over	1740.7	1,787.2	1,789.5	1,721.8	1,733.8	1,722.8
	%			%		
Unemployment Rate %	4.0	8.3	10.1	4.8	15.7	17.3

Source: CSO: Quarterly National Household Survey

7. The following points of comparison between 2007 and 2010 are noteworthy from this table:
- The number of women in the labour market (employed and unemployed) has fallen by only 3,800 over the three years while the number of men in the labour market has fallen by 89,000. This latter figure is likely to equate with the significant numbers of men who have emigrated, returned to their home country or sought work in another third country.
 - The number of women in employment has fallen by 57,100 over the three year period while the number of men in employment has fallen by 233,600.
 - Accordingly while women represented just 42.7 per cent of those in employment in 2007, they now represent 47 per cent of workers in employment.
 - The number of women who are unemployed has risen from 42,200 in 2007 to 95,600 by end 2010, an increase of 53,200, while the numbers of men still in Ireland who have become unemployed has increased by 142,700 from 60,800 to 203,500.
 - The unemployment rate for women is 10.1 per cent while the comparable rate for men is 17.3 per cent.
8. Table 5 also facilitates a comparison of trends between the sexes over the past year. The following points are noteworthy:
- Female employment fell by 21,400 during 2010, but male employment fell by 43,200.
 - The number of unemployed women increased by 17,200, while the number of unemployed men increased by 14,400.
 - The female labour force fell by 4,100 while the male labour force fell by 29,900. As suggested above this may be due to male migration and the greater availability of male employments such as construction in overseas labour markets.
9. About a third of women work part-time, with little significant change over the past three years. However there has been an increase in the numbers of men working part-time although this only represents 12.3 per cent of men in employment. It is note worthy that the Quarterly National Household Survey also shows that only 65,000 of those women working part time (2010 data) would prefer to work longer hours⁵.

⁵ As of Q3 2010 a new methodology has been applied by the CSO to the estimation of the level of part-time underemployment. This arises from work undertaken by Eurostat on defining a common set of indicators to supplement the unemployment rate in terms of unused labour capacity. See www.cso.ie for more details.

10. The downward trend in the employment rate for women, which began to manifest itself towards the end of 2008, has already been noted as has the initial impact of the recession. The Quarterly National Household Survey for Q4/10 showed that 56,300 women were unemployed for less than a year, compared with 86,600 men. The report for Q4 2010 also showed that 115,700 men were unemployed for more than one year compared with 38,300 women.
11. As the economy had not yet climbed out of recession by the end of 2010, it is not possible to draw firm conclusions from these employment data. A downturn in the retail trade and the continuing moratorium on recruitment in the public sector are just two factors which may lead to a greater impact on levels of female employment over the coming months.

12. ACTIONS 2010

12.1 Equality for Women Measure

- In late 2009, thirty-six projects received funding of €30,000 each, under Strand 1 “Access to Employment” of the Equality for Women Measure (EWM) to provide women (currently outside the labour market and in areas of socio-economic disadvantage) with the social skills, education and training to enable them to enter or return to the labour market. In 2010, these projects were afforded the opportunity to renew this funding for a further phase, subject to their having achieved their targets. In total, thirty-two of the original projects availed of this second tranche of funding, which ended in October 2010, as a new phase of the Measure commenced.
- The majority of projects included a number of different elements to their overall training programme, for example: outreach, pre-development courses, literacy supports, taster sessions, accredited training courses, career guidance and mentoring. Total expenditure on this initial phase of the Equality for Women Measure was €1.839 million (excluding administration).
- During 2010, 184 courses were delivered under Strand 1 “Access to Employment” with a total of 4,834 participants. The groups involved in delivering Strand 1 during 2010 report that over 1,000 participants have already advanced into employment or further education or training. A total of 1,146 participants were from “vulnerable groups”, i.e. members of the Travelling community, migrants, persons with a disability and other disadvantaged people, including lone parents. Almost half of all participants (2,180) classed primary or lower secondary education as their highest educational attainment.
- A new phase of the Equality for Women Measure 2010-2013 was launched in May 2010 with an open call for applications for funding of up to €50,000 each per annum (renewable for one or more years) under Strands 1 “Access to Employment”, 2 “Developing Female Entrepreneurship” and 3 “Career Development for Women in Employment”.
- Over 200 applications were received under this phase with each application appraised by Pobal Ltd. in accordance with the criteria set out for the Measure. The outcome was announced in Autumn 2010 and by year end forty-two new projects had entered into contracts to deliver projects with the possibility (subject to conditions being met) of a renewal. The total funding commitment exceeds €1.9 million per annum.
- A total of 31 projects received offers of funding under the Access to Employment Strand of this new phase of the Measure.

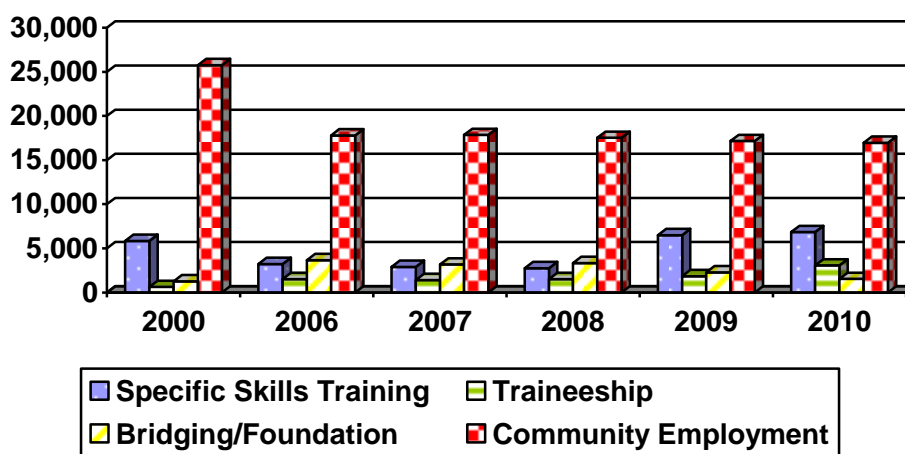
12.2 Services provided by FÁS

FÁS, the State training agency has primary responsibility for the provision of training to enable people to enter or advance in the labour market. Over the time period which coincided with sustained economic growth in Ireland and the move towards full employment, FÁS reports that there had been a

decrease in programme completions under a number of its training schemes. However the economic downturn has led to a reversal of this trend. The paragraphs which follow show women's uptake of the range of training interventions provided by FÁS to increase labour market participation.

- There has been a range of initiatives including training programmes, Return to Work Programmes and Employment Programmes, aimed at increasing labour market participation. 2010 was the year with the highest number of women completing FÁS programmes (21,939) over the twelve year period since 1998.
- The Social Inclusion Model, which was piloted with a group of lone parents, was developed to address issues faced by specific client groups that have little knowledge of, or interaction with, FÁS services. The piloting of this model sought to address the barriers identified that were preventing lone parents from accessing education and training opportunities. Further details can be found on in the section on lone parents below (objective 6-B)

Table 6
Number of females completing FAS programmes by programme type and year



FÁS Programme Completion by Gender - 2010

- In the nine year period 1998-2007 there had been a decrease in programme completions from 89,111 in 1998 to 72,749 in 2007. The number of women completing FÁS training and employment programmes had also decreased, year on year from 40,678 (45.6%) in 1998 to 31,065 (42.7%) in 2007.
- In 2009, programme completions increased to 79,323, and in 2010 further increased to 87,030. Women accounted for 42% of completions in 2009 and 40% in 2010.
- Male participation has always been higher than female participation: it had increased from 63% in 1998 to 70% in 2007 and at December 2009 was 68%. In 2010, male participation decreased slightly to 65%.
- Female participation on training programmes had decreased from 37% in 1998 to 30% in 2008. In 2010, female participation increased to 34%.
- Excluding Apprenticeship programmes (which traditionally have had poor take-up by women) the gender balance on programme completion is better: Fifty four per cent of programme completions were female (12,306) in 2007. This had increased from 47.7% (11,109) in 1998, but fell back to 42% in 2010.

- Despite this, 2010 showed the highest number of women completing FÁS programmes (21,939) in the twelve year period 1998-2010.

Training Programmes:

Standard Based Apprenticeship

- Apprenticeship is the recognised means by which persons are trained to become craftspeople in Ireland. The main craft trades have been designed by FÁS and come within the scope of the Statutory Apprenticeship system. Apprenticeship in Ireland is organised by FÁS in co-operation with the Department of Education and Skills, Employer Bodies and Trade Unions. The apprenticeship scheme is 'Standards-Based'. To help apprentices achieve these standards, the scheme provides alternating phases of on-the-job and off-the-job training in FÁS Training Centres and Educational Colleges.
- In 2010, 11,658 persons completed Apprenticeships; however, only fifty-eight of these were women. This represents just 0.5% of the total. It is important to note that apprenticeship is a multi-year programme and the same individual will be included in successive years in the data presented.

Specific Skills Training

- The Specific Skills Training (SST) Programme consists of courses which are employment-led and lead to qualifications that offer learners both generic and advanced skills. The courses are suitable for people with good personal skills i.e. literacy, numeric and communication skills and who meet the learner profile for the course.
- In 2000, the number of women who completed specific skills training peaked at 5,837, accounting for 45 per cent of all completions. Since 2000, there has been a gradual decrease in female completion rates to 2,757 in 2008. In 2010, a record number of people completed specific skills training – 20,618 – of which 33 per cent, or 6,836, were women.
- In 2010, 1,276 people completed Specific Skills Training that was sponsored. The overwhelming majority, 1,262 or 99 per cent, participating on this sponsored type training were male.

Traineeship

- The Traineeship Programme consists of occupational specific training courses that use a combination of off-the job and structured on-the job workplace training. Courses are developed in conjunction with social partners, union/employer organisations and regulatory bodies. The training objectives and curricula of Traineeship programmes reflect current market needs and provide skills training appropriate to the needs of learners and employers.
- The total number of people completing Traineeships in 2010 was 4,371, a significant increase from 964 in 2004. The proportion of women completing traineeship programmes has increased from 43 per cent (626) in 2000 to 70 per cent (3,065) in 2009. This increase may reflect the type of Traineeships being offered, for example Childcare, Health, Beauty, Care of the Elderly, and clerical-administration.

Bridging/Foundation Programmes

- Foundation Training Programmes include courses for people who have left school early and/or mature adults who have been out of work for a considerable period of time. The courses can be flexible in delivery and concentrate on basic personal skills development, career direction and skill sampling, with a view to progression to Specific Skills Training programmes or entry to the labour market.
- In 2010, a total of 3,789 persons completed Bridging/Foundations programmes, of which 1,527 were women (40 per cent).

Return to Work Programmes

- The Return to Work Programme is suitable for people who may have been out of paid employment for a long time and who are interested in returning to the labour market. The programme is mainly for mature adults who have good basic skills i.e. literacy, numeracy and communication skills. It can be flexible in delivery and concentrates on personal development, building self-esteem, career planning, selected technical and soft skills.
- Women make up the majority of people completing Return to Work Programmes. Women completing Return to Work programmes decreased from 1,450 (89%) in 2001 to 146 (59%) in 2010. Overall, the total numbers completing Return to Work programmes (247) in 2010 were the lowest ever recorded.

Community Training Programmes:

Local Training Initiative (LTI)

- The Local Training Initiative programme is a project-based training and work experience programme carried out in the local community run by local community groups. The programme allows local communities to carry out valuable and necessary projects of benefit to their communities, while at the same time training participants in areas related to the project work so that they can go on to gain employment or progress to further training. Anyone who is unemployed and over the age of 16, at any level of literacy, is eligible to participate.
- Throughput on Local Training Initiatives was 3,655 in 2010. The number of women completing Local Training Initiatives has ranged from 884 (74%) in 2003 to 2,046 (56%) in 2007. Participation by women on LTI's peaked in 2001 at 77%. In 2010, the number of women who completed LTIs was 2,046 or 56 per cent of the total.

Community Training Centres (CTCs)

- Participants at the Community Training Centres are primarily young men and women between 16 and 21 years of age, who have left school without completing formal examinations (the Junior Certificate); who are experiencing difficulties finding a job; and who are keen to gain a qualification. While this is the priority group for Community Training Centres, they can however provide training for other young people under the age of 25 who are disadvantaged and unemployed, with agreement from FÁS.
- In 2007, the number of women completing programmes in CTCs was 820, 50 per cent of the total number of completions. In 2010, the total number of people who completed CTC programmes was 1,997, of which 841 were women (42 per cent).

Specialist Training Providers

- FÁS contracts with 20 Specialist Training Providers (STPs), such as the National Learning Network, in its centres country-wide to deliver training courses to people with disabilities who require more intensive support than would be available in non-specialist training provision.
- In 2010, 1,334 people completed training provided by specialist training providers, 653 were women (49%). The numbers completing training provided by specialist training providers has remained the same for the last five years, as has the proportion of women.

Employment Programmes:

Community Employment (CE)

- The criteria for participating on the Community Employment programme are based on age and length of time in receipt of various social welfare payments. In general it is targeted at people aged 25 or over. Certain groups such as Travellers and refugees aged 18 or over are also eligible.
- The number of women who completed FÁS employment programmes (Community Employment (CE) and Job Initiative (JI)) in 2010 was 16,970 or 55.5% of the total number of completions.

- It is important to note that CE and JI interventions typically last several years and ‘throughput’ includes roll-overs which overstate actual exits as a result.

Objective 1-B
To decrease the gender pay gap

CONTEXT

13. As indicated in the National Women’s Strategy, the measurement of the gender pay gap is subject to different interpretations, resulting in wide variations in statistics. While the European Commission and Eurostat published data drawn from the EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) for some years, there were reservations about these data. For Ireland it showed a gender pay gap of 9 per cent in recent years. One of the weaknesses of this data source was the fact that it included part-time workers working fewer than 15 hours per week. It was likely, given employment trends that most of these workers would be female and the data would therefore be skewed.
14. In its 2010 Report on Equality between Women and Men, the European Commission has revised its methodology and has published data based on men’s and women’s average gross hourly earnings. Table 7 below is drawn from the most recent data published by the European Commission, which relates to 2007.

TABLE 7
GENDER PAY GAP (UNADJUSTED) 2007 – EU

Top Four		IRELAND/EU AVERAGE		Bottom Four	
Italy	5.1	IRELAND (13TH)	17.1	Netherlands	23.6
Malta	5.2			Slovakia	23.6
Poland	7.5	EU – 27	17.4	Austria	25.5
Portugal	8.3			Estonia	30.3

Source: European Commission: Report on Equality between Women and Men 2010

13. The table shows that Ireland is ranked in 13th place in terms of the Gender Pay Gap, marginally better than the EU average. Italy and Malta are the best performers on this indicator, although these countries have very few female labour market participants, while the bottom four have the widest gender pay gap but have relatively high participation rates.
14. Issues affecting the gender pay gap are also complex and a wide number of factors are considered to impact upon it. For example, the introduction of a minimum wage and the greater availability of childcare following implementation of the Equal Opportunities Childcare Programme and its successor National Childcare Investment Programme, are likely to have impacted positively on the gender pay gap in Ireland. However extensive statistical research based on gender disaggregated data is required before valid conclusions can be reached.

15. ACTIONS 2010

The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during the period 2010:

- 15.1 The **Equality Authority**’s Equality Mainstreaming Unit has provided ESF funding under the Human Capital Investment Operational Programme (HCIOP) 2007-2013 for a project by IBEC to develop a template for an equal pay audit. This template will be piloted within the manufacturing sector. The project will be completed at the end of 2011.
- 15.2 To end June 2010, the **National Employment Rights Authority** (NERA):
- carried out a total of 7,964 calls, interviews and inspections, involving 2,214 individual employers, and unpaid wages due to employees totalling €538,228 were recovered.

- In the same period, a total of 816 inspections were carried out under the National Minimum Wage Act. Ninety-four percent of the employers inspected were found to be in compliance with the Act. Unpaid wages of €57,097 were recovered as a result of these inspections.
- 15.3 As referenced in Chapter 2 on International developments (page 11); the Belgian Presidency of the European Union prepared a set of draft Council Conclusions on the gender pay gap in 2010 entitled *'Strengthening the commitment and stepping up action to close the gender pay gap, and review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action'*.
- An accompanying evaluation report was prepared by the Belgian Presidency on *'The gender pay gap in the Member States of the European Union: quantitative and qualitative indicators'*.
 - In 2001, when Belgium previously held the Presidency of the European Union, a set of Council Conclusions on the gender pay gap was adopted by Council. A report containing information on pay inequalities and defining six quantitative and three qualitative indicators on the gender pay gap was produced.
 - The 2010 Report by the Belgian Presidency provides an overview of the situation regarding the gender pay gap in the European Union, on the basis of the nine indicators adopted in 2001 and proposes the updating of these indicators to take account of the statistical developments and changes to legislation since 2001. A questionnaire was issued to all Member States in advance of the preparation of the Report to analyse the legislation, policies and measures being implemented within the Member States to combat pay gaps.
 - The Report divided the indicators into a limited number of indicators for regular use and complementary indicators for expert use.
 - Some of the key findings in the Report include:
 - That a large proportion of the pay gap is attributable to the fact that more women than men work part-time. Part-time jobs are often clustered in certain sectors and occupations where salaries are lower and opportunities for training and career progression are more limited. Since it is mainly women who occupy this type of job, it inevitably widens the pay gap between women and men. Women working part time earn on average between 18% and 40 % less per hour than men working full time.
 - Differences in the sectors of activity and occupations also explain the pay discrepancies between women and men. Generally speaking, the sectors accounting for the largest share of women's employment are education, health and social work, the retail trade, the catering industry, etc., while the sectors accounting for the largest share of men's employment are construction, transport and communication, technology, etc. This horizontal segregation gives rise to stark differences in the average earnings of women and men.
 - The gender pay gap is more pronounced in the five sectors providing most female employment, where it is as high as 24 %. The gap in this instance may be due to vertical segregation: in the same sector men are more likely to occupy a post with greater responsibility and higher pay than women employed in the same sector.
 - The double burden of paid work and non-paid work in the family, combined with a possible dearth of childcare facilities, is one of the main obstacles to the full participation of women in the labour market and the continuing gender pay gap.

Objective 2
To promote the advancement of women in the labour force

CONTEXT

16. This objective has two points of focus – efforts to engage women in a broader range of economic (labour) sectors and efforts to enable women to rise to more senior positions in their work place. Both may require a breakdown of barriers and stereotypes.

TABLE 8
EMPLOYMENT: BROAD OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS BY SEX 2007, 2009 AND 2010

Broad occupational group	Men				Women				Women as % of total
	Q4/2007	Q4/2009	Q4/2010	% Change	Q4/2007	Q4/2009	Q4/2010	% Change	Q4/2010
Managers and Administrators	218.1	212.6	203.1	-6.9	101.1	105.3	99.8	-1.3	32.9
Professional	121.2	125.5	118.0	-2.6	120.3	126.5	132.7	10.3	52.9
Assoc. Prof and Technical	79.5	83.1	80.0	0.6	115.6	111.8	109.5	-5.3	57.8
Clerical and secretarial	61.9	59.8	58.2	-6.0	192.9	182.8	170.2	-11.8	74.5
Craft and related	287.4	181.4	162.0	-43.6	12.8	9.2	9.1	-28.9	5.3
Personal/Protective services	87.7	86.1	86.9	-0.9	160.4	151.7	146.9	-8.4	62.8
Sales	74.0	66.2	63.9	-13.7	117.1	101.6	98.5	-15.9	60.6
Plant and machine operatives	152.6	117.1	114.2	-25.2	25.2	20.7	22.2	-11.9	16.3
Other	131.3	84.4	86.7	-34.0	79.6	62.0	61.3	-23.0	41.4
TOTAL	1,213.7	1,016.2	973.0	-19.8	925.0	871.6	850.2	-8.1	46.6

Source: CSO: Quarterly National Household Survey Q4/2010

17. Table 8 above is equally relevant to this objective and to the earlier objective in relation to women's engagement in the labour market. It also clearly reflects the effects of the economic downturn, with a significant decrease in employment for both sexes. The last two figures in the table show that women have moved to 46.6 per cent of those in employment in 2010. The table also shows the marked decline in employment in some occupational sectors. In this table, caution must be exercised in comparing the percentage change data due to significant differences in the base line data.
18. From the perspective of advancing women in the labour market, the table shows that between Q4 2007 and Q4 2010, the number of women in the professions has increased by 10.3 per cent or 12,400 women. Women now account for 52.9 per cent of the total figure in the "professionals" category. The number of women in the "Managers and Administrators" and the "Associated Professional and Technical" grades fell slightly in 2010, having increased in the period to end 2009.
19. The number of women employed as "Plant and Machine operatives" has increased by 7.2 per cent between 2009 and 2010, although the overall figure of 22,200 women remains low.

ACTIONS 2010

20. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2010:

20.1 FAS

- FÁS, the National Training and Employment Authority, anticipates the needs of, and responds to, a constantly changing labour market. FÁS has increased the range of training options available to Job Seekers to assist their re-entry into the labour market.
- Two new apprenticeships have been introduced, and a further three are in preparation. However, due to amalgamation of a number of apprenticeships to ensure greater relevance and employability (from 6 to 2) the effective overall number is currently 24, though a number of apprentices are currently completing their training under the previous designations.

20.2 Equality Authority

- The Equality Authority’s Equality Mainstreaming Unit supported a project by the Commercial Mushroom Producers, SIPTU and the Migrant Rights Centre Ireland to develop equality supports for the mushroom picking sector. This project was focused on female migrant workers. A follow-on project is currently underway.
- The Equality Mainstreaming Unit also supported IBEC to develop a maternity toolkit for employers.
- The Equality Authority’s Mainstreaming Unit, which receives European Social Fund (ESF) funding, operates an equality scheme for enterprises to enable them to develop an equality infrastructure.
- The ‘Pregnancy at Work’ research project, commissioned by the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme and the Equality Authority, progressed during 2010. The findings will help to inform the important role of policy in mediating the effects of childbirth and childcare on women’s employment. The findings will be published in 2011.

Objective 3 To support more women as entrepreneurs

CONTEXT

21. This objective seeks to encourage more women to become entrepreneurs and to foster the availability of childcare and of improved work/life balance options so that it is possible for women to engage as entrepreneurs. Statistics from the County and City Enterprise Boards (CEBs) show that significant numbers of women participate in the CEBs’ “Start your Own Business” courses but this high level of activity is not actually translating into business start ups.
22. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) survey for Ireland for 2008 (the most up-to-date statistics currently available) shows that early stage entrepreneurship by women in Ireland grew between 2006 and 2007 but decreased sharply in 2008. As Table 9 below shows, this decrease brought Ireland below the OECD average and just above the EU average.

TABLE 9
WOMEN EARLY STAGE ENTREPRENEURS 2006, 2007 AND 2008

	Percentage of adult women engaged in early stage entrepreneurship		
	2006	2007	2008
Ireland	4.2%	5.9%	4.0%
United States	7.4%	7.3%	8.8%
Average across the OECD	4.3%	4.3%	4.8%
Average across the EU	3.5%	3.6%	3.9%

Source: Entrepreneurship in Ireland 2008, Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM)

23. Table 10 below is also drawn from the GEM Entrepreneurship survey. It shows that women have slightly lower expectations of the success of their ventures than do men. Almost a third of women entrepreneurs did not envisage creating additional jobs, compared with just over a fifth of men. On the other hand, a sixth of men expected to employ 20 or more persons within 5 years, while less than a twelfth of women had such an expectation.

TABLE 10
GROWTH EXPECTATIONS OF MEN AND WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS (2004-2008)

Growth Expectations (Jobs expected in 5 years)	Percentage of all early stage entrepreneurs	
	Men	Women
No additional jobs	23%	33%
1 to 5 jobs	40%	38%
6 to 19 jobs	20%	20%
20 or more jobs	17%	9%

Source: Entrepreneurship in Ireland 2008, Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM)

ACTIONS 2010

24. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2010:

24.1 Equality for Women Measure

As mentioned previously, the Equality for Women Measure was relaunched in 2010 and included a strand to make funding available to support women as entrepreneurs. Fifty three project applications were submitted and following evaluation 10 were selected for funding, to receive a total of €415,000 in ESF and Exchequer funding. This includes an interesting range of projects including a project working with travellers and a project working with programme refugees.

24.2 Enterprise Ireland

The **Entrepreneurship and Regional Development Unit in Enterprise Ireland** is evaluating various promotional programmes and 'start your own business' courses aimed at female entrepreneurs. The Unit is also researching the main factors which contribute towards female owned High Potential Start Ups in Ireland and international comparisons for female owned SMEs.

24.3 City and County Enterprise Boards

The **City and County Enterprise Boards (CEBs) Network** indicate that alongside their male counterparts, the demand for services from female entrepreneurs and potential female entrepreneurs has increased during 2010.

National Women's Enterprise Day 2010

- The fourth annual National Women's Enterprise Day took place on 19th November 2010 in the Limerick Strand Hotel. This event, hosted by the County and City Enterprise Boards, received grant support from the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Irish Exchequer under the Equality for Women Measure.
- The event attracted over 300 participants and keynote speakers included a number of prominent national and international entrepreneurs. The former Minister of State with responsibility for Equality, Integration and Human Rights, Ms. Mary White, T.D., also addressed the conference.
- The event aimed
 - To provide a national networking forum for women in business that will support them in starting and growing their businesses.
 - To promote best practice of networking and facilitation for women in enterprise.
 - To facilitate female entrepreneurs from throughout Ireland in developing useful business contacts and in improving their own business management / networking skills
 - To facilitate access to a broad range of specialist business information from relevant agencies,
 - To provide one to one mentoring sessions for participant entrepreneurs with specialists from a range of fields,
 - To highlight and promote female entrepreneurship.

24.4 Going for Growth Initiative

- The Going for Growth Initiative was launched in October 2007. The Initiative is supported by Enterprise Ireland and receives grant support from the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Irish Exchequer under the Equality for Women Measure.
- The Initiative aims to support women entrepreneurs with a clear aspiration for growth by providing peer support and the leadership of a more experienced or lead entrepreneur. Lead

entrepreneurs include Lulu O’Sullivan, Chief Executive and founder of GiftsDirect.com, Julie Colclough, the founder of Waterford-based supply chain services company Eurobase, and Rita Shah of the Shabra Group. Former lead entrepreneurs continue to be associated with the Initiative by serving on the advisory panel to further develop and strengthen the Initiative including, Anne Heraty, CEO, CPL Resources PLC, Mary Ann O’Brien of Lily O’Brien’s Chocolates and Amanda Pratt, Executive Director of Avoca.

- Graduates of previous cycles of the Going for Growth Programme include Rosey Sheehan, Broadway Bagels, winner of the WMB Entrepreneur of the Year 2008, Nikki Evans of PerfectCard Ltd., who was named WMB Entrepreneur of the Year 2010, and well known entrepreneur, Nicola Byrne of 11890.
- In order to be considered suitable for participation, entrepreneurs must already be the owner manager of a business which has been trading for at least two years. Participants are grouped by stage of development with a matched group of their peers in structured sessions which are led by lead entrepreneurs. In 2010, 60 female entrepreneurs participated in the Going for Growth Initiative.
- The Going for Growth National Forum was held in March 2010. This event provided an opportunity for all participants on the programme and the lead entrepreneurs to meet, network and hear presentations from a number of speakers on topics including:
 - Marketing, including the use of digital media;
 - Understanding management accounts;
 - Access and availability of finance (debt and equity);
 - The nature of the supports available from the development agencies, including the County and City Enterprise Boards and Enterprise Ireland; and
 - Building a winning team and other people issues.
- In November 2010, a call was made for a further 60 female entrepreneurs to participate in the Initiative during 2010/2011. The roundtable sessions of this cycle will take place during the first six months of 2011 and will focus on the growth challenge. The questions to be explored over six sessions will include –
 - Why go for growth?
 - Is your business model fit for purpose?
 - How to increase profitability through increased sales?
 - What resources/capabilities do you need to underpin growth?
 - How will you manage growth?
 - What is the best growth path for your business?
 - How can you make sure that profitable growth is the result of all your effort?
- A Going for Growth Initiative website has also been developed www.goingforgrowth.com.

24.5 Department of Education and Skills

- The Department of Education and Skills supports enterprise in schools through specific programmes in Enterprise in senior cycle. The Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme (LCVP) and the Leaving Certificate Applied (LCA) programme both provide for action learning approaches, community based learning, a strong focus on personal development and teamwork, and a work experience programme.
- Some 14,500 students participated in 2010 in the Student Enterprise Awards organised by the County Enterprise Boards and the Mini-Company Get Up and Go competition which is part of the Transition Year Programme. The Sean Lemass Award for Enterprise was presented to the Top 3 winners of each competition by the Taoiseach in 2010. The teams in the 6 award winning schools consisted of 21 males and 14 females.

- Enterprise is part of Leaving Certificate Business Studies, the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme Link Modules, the vocational preparation and guidance aspects of the Leaving Certificate Applied and an option within Transition Year. In 2010, of the 18,790 who sat Leaving Certificate Business Studies, 51.6% were females, 15,596 sat the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme Link Modules, of whom 54.6% were female. 3,358 sat the Leaving Certificate Applied programme, of whom 46% were female.
- Within Transition Year, 5,620 students followed the Mini-Company programme of whom 62% were female. An additional 4,322 students followed other enterprise education programmes, of whom 56% were female.

Objective 4
To seek to ensure that girls and women achieve their full potential in the education system

CONTEXT

25. Subject choice, particularly at second level, is an important factor influencing future achievement both in education and in employment choices. For example, a certain mix of subjects may be required in order to access some third level courses. It is essential that girls are facilitated to participate in the full range of subject options to ensure that their career choices are not limited in later life.
26. Gender mainstreaming in the education system is vital to ensure that a gender perspective informs all aspects of education. The education sector has been strongly focused on gender equality for many years, particularly through a strong focus on gender mainstreaming within the Department of Education and Skills and the broader Education sector. However this has not hugely influenced subject choice, particularly in relation to course selection which would lead to greater involvement in sectors such as computing, architecture and engineering.
27. Table 11 below shows the actual number of pupils taking higher level science, mathematics and related subjects in 2007, 2009 and 2010 in the Leaving Certificate examination.
28. The numbers of girls taking higher level mathematics has decreased by 80 or 2.0 per cent, while the number of girls taking higher level physics has decreased by 186 or 11.9 per cent. In 2010, girls account for only 45.7 % of all students taking higher level mathematics and for just 28.3% of the total number of students taking higher level physics. Female participation in engineering has increased by 17 or 12.7 per cent since 2007, although the overall number remains very low at 151, while male participation increased by 482 or 14.9 per cent.

TABLE 11
NUMBERS TAKING SELECTED SUBJECTS 2007, 2009 AND 2010 – BOYS AND GIRLS

Subject (higher level)	Boys				Girls			
	2007	2009	2010	Absolute Change	2007	2009	2010	Absolute Change
Biology	5,441	6,858	7,293	1,852	12,080	13,244	13,676	1,596
Chemistry	2,407	2,614	2,686	279	3,322	3,423	3,610	288
Mathematics	4,472	4,681	4,554	82	3,916	3,739	3,836	(-80)
Physics	3,657	3,398	3,497	(-160)	1,566	1,296	1,380	(-186)
Design & Communication Graphics*	2,610*	3,714*	3,781	1,171	268	396*	452	184
Construction Studies	5,922	6,703	6,742	820	404	510	492	88
Engineering	3,227	3,422	3,709	482	134	181	151	17

Source CSO 'Women and Men in Ireland 2007, 2009 & 2010'

*In 2009 the Subject "Technical drawing" was renamed as "Design & Communication Graphics"

ACTIONS 2010

29. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2010:

29.1 *The Department of Education and Skills reports:*

- The Report of the Science, Education and Technology (SET) Committee has been largely completed however, additional work required to prepare the report for publication was not completed due to resource constraints. As a result data collected for the report is significantly out of date. Since work in this area has been overtaken by other initiatives in the area of science and maths DES resources are being concentrated on these new measures.
- Some €2m per annum is allocated to the Discover Science and Engineering programme, funded by FORFAS, to promote the take up of science, engineering and technology in schools and colleges, as well as an awareness of the importance of these disciplines in wider society. The programme includes activities under Science Week, Science clubs in schools, Science Excellence Awards, conferences and lectures, science quizzes etc. Discover Science also promotes measures to promote awareness of career options in science and engineering, and to disseminate information on role models in these areas.
- Funded under the Strategic Innovation Fund, the National Centre for Excellence in Maths and Science has been established in the University of Limerick. Its role is to co-ordinate, support and implement measures which will enhance mathematics and science teaching and learning at all levels of the education system. The centre will have a key focus on professional development of teachers, student-centred pedagogy and appropriate materials, and outreach provision.
- eQuality Measures, a resource to assist post-primary schools in the promotion of gender equality using the strategy of gender mainstreaming, was circulated to all post-primary schools in late 2009 for implementation in 2010. The resource consists of two DVDs and five booklets.
- All post-primary inspectors received an in-put on eQuality Measures in September 2009. Inputs on gender and gender mainstreaming in the context of whole-school evaluation, featured in the training provided to newly recruited inspectors at primary level in 2007.
- Schools can avail of the resource “*Prompt questions towards drafting a Policy in relation to Equality of Access and Participation (Equal Opportunities)*” against which primary and post-primary schools can evaluate gender mainstreaming in the context of their school.
- Specific gender focused questions and indicators to evaluate gender mainstreaming and gender issues are contained in templates utilised in Whole School Evaluations at primary level, specifically in interviews with parents and in the evaluation of the quality of whole-school planning.
- In evaluations relating to Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE), Physical Education (PE) and History indicators focused on gender equity are included.
- Currently a working group of technologies inspectors at post-primary level is working towards the inclusion of specific questions regarding gender for use in the inspection of technologies.
- In terms of guidance in schools, guidance counsellors are very much aware of the need for guidance which promotes equality, is impartial and objective, and encourages students to consider non traditional career choices. The website www.careersportal.ie is now widely used as a guidance tool and provides integrated information on occupational profiles, labour market trends, skills assessment tools, and videos featuring role models in different careers. These are designed to encourage males and females to consider a wide range of occupations. There is a particular focus on STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) careers.
- A number of gender-related research projects were completed under the auspices of the Gender Equality Unit of the Department of Education and Skills. This Unit was established to promote equal opportunities between men and women, in particular through a gender mainstreaming approach to education. This Unit has been subsumed in to the Department of Education and Skill’s Central Policy Unit.

- The Research and Development Committee of the Department of Education and Skills funds education-related research, including those related to gender issues. The number of research projects funded by the Committee has reduced significantly due to current financial constraints.
- The Department also provides funding to the National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) and AONTAS, the National Adult Learning Organisation. These organisations conduct research on issues in further and adult education, including gender issues.
- Provision for further and adult education programmes, including targeted supports for “hard-to-reach” groups of adults and women, was maintained at 2009 levels. The majority of participants in further and adult education programmes continue to be female.
- Provision for the Adult Education Guidance Initiative (AEGI) support service was maintained at 2009 levels. As part of Budget 2010, in September 2010, the Childcare in Education and Training Scheme (CETS) was introduced by the Office of the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs (OMCYA) and the Department of Education and Skills. Under the CETS, participants in a range of further and adult education and FÁS training programmes are eligible to avail of free childcare places. The CETS is administered by the OMCYA.
- In 2009, 70% of recipients of awards for completion of Further Education in VEC Centres were female. Figures for 2010 are not yet available.

29.2 Supporting women into management posts in education

- “Women into Leadership and Management in Education” courses are held on an annual basis in Drumcondra Education Centre. A course was held in Spring 2010 from which a support group of women leaders was developed. This group meets a number of times each term. In addition, a one week Summer Course for female leaders and aspiring female leaders was held in August 2010.
- Workshops with local female leaders and aspiring leaders have been facilitated in Education Centres across the Education Centre Network.
- Programmes available under the former Leadership Development Service (now part of the Leadership strand of PDST – Professional Development Service for Teachers) continue to be offered and are open to all established, newly appointed and aspiring school leaders. There is no specific course provision for women but the overall attendance statistics indicate that 66% of participants on these leadership programmes are female.

29.3 Supports for young mothers

- The educational element of nine Teen Parenting Support Projects continue to be supported under the School Completion Programme with funding amounting to €371,200 provided in 2010. The allocation of funding is outlined in Table 12 below.

**TABLE 12
FUNDING TO TEEN PARENTING SUPPORT PROJECTS**

Project	Funding allocated
Carlow/Kilkenny Teen Parenting Project	€25,000
Cork Teen Parenting Project	€20,000
Donegal Teen Parenting Project	€20,000
Doras Bui Teen Parenting Project	€35,000
Barnardos Teen Parenting Project – Dublin	€60,000
Galway Teen Parenting Project	€43,200
Limerick Teen Parenting Project	€40,000
NEHB Teen Parenting Project – Drogheda	€30,000
Barnardos Teen Parenting Project – Waterford	€98,000

- In 2010, the Teen Parenting Support Projects supported 1,334 young parents.
- The ‘Teen Mothers Programme’, Finglas and ‘Doras Bui’, Coolock, provide child care for young mothers in education.

- Youth Reach, Foróige, Neighbourhood Youth Projects and community youth projects all support young mothers in returning to education and upskilling.
- The 'Baby Think It Over' Programme is currently operational in a number of secondary schools in the DML Regional.

Objective 5-A
To ensure that childcare services are optimised to meet the needs of parents and children alike

CONTEXT

30. The need to develop childcare to support the labour market participation of women has been recognised in Ireland for the past ten years and had led to the implementation of the National Childcare Strategy and a significant increase in the availability of childcare services across Ireland.
31. Support towards the cost of children is met by the State through child benefit which is payable monthly to mothers (and guardians).
32. The ongoing availability of childcare is central to the continuing engagement of mothers in the labour market. In addition the European Union continues to emphasise the importance of greater sharing of family responsibilities between women and men as a key support for women's labour market participation and for their advancement into decision-making roles.

ACTIONS 2010

33. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2010:
 - 33.1 ***National Childcare Investment Programme***
 The development of new childcare places under the National Childcare Investment Programme continues with over 24,000 of the planned 25,000 addition places now in operation.
 - 33.2 ***Developments in the Childcare and Pre-school sector:***
 Significant developments were seen in the sector during 2010 with two new programmes, and the mainstreaming of a third programme (previously an interim programme). As a result, funding programmes run by the Childcare Directorate in the Department of Health and Children either meet or subsidise the childcare costs for families of approximately 100,000 children each pre-school year.

Free pre-school year in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme:

The Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Programme was introduced with effect from 1 January 2010. It replaces the Early Childcare Supplement, which was paid directly to parents, regardless of whether they availed of paid childcare or not.

- The ECCE Programme is a universal one, open to Irish-resident children for one year, generally the year before Junior Infants, where the child is aged more than 3 years and 2 months and less than 4 years and 7 months on 1st September of that pre-school year. All participating services must have qualified staff and agree to implement Síolta, the National Quality Framework for Early Childhood Education. Approximately 95 per cent of childcare and pre-school services participate on the programme.
- The programme has two main options:
 - Where the child is already attending daycare (in a 50-week model), the scheme provides for 2 hours and 15 minutes per day of programme based activities, with a €48.50 weekly reduction in the childcare facilities paid by the parent.

- Where the child attends a 38-week pre-school (aligned with the primary school year), they are provided with a 3 hour pre-school session each day free of charge, with the State paying €64.50 capitation per week to the pre-school. A higher weekly capitation of €75.00 applies to a number of services with higher qualified staff. Nearly 90 per cent of children are in the pre-school/38-week option.
- The first intake into the programme was for a “short-year” from January 2010 (up to June 2010 in the pre-school model, and up to August 2010 in the daycare model). A total of 53,000 children participated in this intake, a participation rate of approximately 83 per cent among children who enrolled in Junior Infants in the following September.
- The first full year commenced in September 2010, with 63,000 children in the scheme, an estimated participation rate of 94 per cent. A significant number of additional children avail of alternative State funded pre-school settings, for example, Early Start, funded by the Department of Education and Skills, and HSE funded specialist pre-schools for children with special needs. A number of children receive alternative (and more generous) support from other Childcare Directorate schemes, so that the actual participation rate in State funded pre-school in the year before Junior Infants is estimated at over 97 per cent.

Childcare Education and Training Support (CETS) Programme:

- The Childcare Education and Training Support (CETS) programme was introduced from September 2010 for trainees/students with FÁS and the VECS, to replace a €63.50 childcare allowance and, in some cases, a State subvention of €70.00 in community-based childcare settings. Under the new scheme, qualified parents receive free childcare places for their children, with the State paying the childcare provider €170.00 for the place. There is provision under the scheme for 2,800 Full-Time Equivalent places, which may be full-day, half-day or after-school places, and would vary in duration from ten weeks to fifty-one weeks, depending on the course attended by the parent.

Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) Programme:

- The Community Childcare Subvention (CCS) programme was introduced from September 2010 and mainstreams the interim Community Childcare Subvention Scheme 2008-2010 (CCSS). The new programme focuses supports to a greater extent to those in low income employment. The CCS subvents parents availing of community-based, not-for-profit, childcare, with fees paid on a tiered basis. Parents are charged the cost price of the childcare place, less the subvention they attract, which can be up to €100 per child, depending on their entitlement to benefits such as the Family Income Supplement, social welfare benefits, such as the One Parent Family payment, and GP Visit or Medical Cards. Families who are subvented at the full rate are guaranteed that level of subvention for the remainder of that pre-school year and are guaranteed at least half of that subvention rate for the following year.
- Currently the scheme supports almost 24,000 children, or 10,800 full-time equivalent places. There are approximately 6,000 further children in these services who do not qualify for subvention and who are charged the cost price of childcare places which averages €150.00 per week for full daycare.

Development of a fully professional childcare workforce:

- The Workforce Development Plan for the ECCE sector was published in December 2010. To date, the following has been achieved:
 - A review of national award standards for level 4, 5 and 6 awards on the national qualifications framework, which incorporate national practice guidelines (Sólta and Aistear) and which are referenced against agreed national occupation role profiles (Model Framework for education training and professional development).
 - Programme development against these new award standards is currently at an advanced state and it is expected that the first level 5 programmes will be available through the VEC from September 2011.

- An audit of the qualification profile of the services under contract to deliver the ECCE programme has been completed and a number of support initiatives for upskilling staff are being developed, for example, an online learning initiative. The audit revealed that very substantial progress has been made towards achieving a minimum level of qualification across the workforce.
- An advisory panel drawn from third level education and training providers will advise on the suitability of education and training qualifications to practice as a graduate in ECCE settings.
- There has been a significant increase in the availability of degree programmes, from four in 2000 to fourteen in 2011. More flexible delivery options are also available.

33.3 *Developments at EU level:*

- There has been an increased level of interest by the European Union in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECEC) services, with a European Commission Communication published on ECEC services. The Council of the European Union has also invited Member States to:
 1. Analyse and evaluate existing ECEC services at national level in terms of their availability, proximity, affordability and quality;
 2. Introduce measures to ensure universal access to ECEC and to reinforce its quality; and
 3. Invest efficiently in ECEC as a long-term growth-enhancing measure.
- The Council has also invited the European Commission to support the Member States in identifying and exchanging good policies and practices via the open method of coordination. This is expected to involve a greater level of information sharing and testing of best practice in the EU over the coming years. The Department of Health and Children⁶ will participate fully in this process. Given the high level of participation in the ECCE scheme in particular, the immediate priorities which Ireland will be particularly interested in learning from others is in effective and sustainable means of quality improvement in the sector.
- The Europe 2020 economic growth and employment policy mentioned in Chapter 2 also places considerable emphasis on the need for EU Member States to develop affordable quality childcare services to support the needs of women who are active in the labour market.

33.4 *FÁS spending in relation to childcare:*

- The County Childcare Committee Grant Scheme, administered by the FÁS Social Inclusion Unit, is an opportunity for new ideas to enhance the FÁS social inclusion process. Its purpose is to explore ways to support the County and City Childcare Committees to achieve their commitments under the National Childcare Training Strategy and their developmental needs.
- Grants are provided to County Childcare Committees in response to an application process for local, small scale developmental activities that have additionality to offer the sector, such as workshops, seminars, networking activities, top-up training, evaluation work on new training initiatives and training needs assessments and/or other innovative projects.
- In 2010, FÁS provided approximately €140,000 in grants to County Childcare Committees throughout the country. Funding was allocated for a number of initiatives including:
 - ‘Keeping safe’ Child Protection training – this course was provided in conjunction with Barnardos and the HSE to Childcare Providers. The course offered guidance and training on the promotion of child welfare and pre-school regulations;
 - FETAC Level 6 Advanced Certificate in Childcare Supervision;

⁶ Following the General Election in February 2011, the Government has established a full-cabinet position of Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, with responsibility, inter alia, for childcare and pre-school services.

- A comprehensive needs assessment was carried out with 31 after-school service providers in County Offaly to map service provision and determine support structures to increase this provision if necessary;
- Buntas Start workshops - The Buntas Start workshops provide a comprehensive physical activity programme for children aged 2-5 years old. It is designed for pre-school staff so they can provide a wide range of learning opportunities for young children living in disadvantaged areas to develop their fundamental motor skills, co-ordination and develop a positive attitude to physical activity;
- A Language and Literacy Programme in Waterford. The aim of this project is to deliver a practical language and literacy programme enabling childcare practitioners to support young children's language and literacy skills. The programme was delivered by the Irish Pre-school Playgroups Association who has collaborated with the University of Pennsylvania in the development of this programme.

Objective 5-B

To ensure that the care infrastructure supports women's socio-economic engagement

CONTEXT

34. The care of children, older family members as well as the care of other dependent persons has traditionally fallen to female family members in Ireland, as elsewhere in Europe. Accordingly the European Union has begun to emphasise the importance of a comprehensive caring infrastructure to support elder care and the care of other dependants to complement childcare. A number of EU Presidency initiatives have reviewed the importance of care sharing for elder care to ensure that these responsibilities do not fall to women only or impact upon the careers of women only.
35. Statistics from the Department of Social Protection, published in 2010, show that the primary beneficiaries of the range of income supports for carers in Ireland are largely women. Table 13 overleaf shows the number of persons in different age groups in receipt of Carer's Allowance, Carer's Benefit and the Respite Care Grant in 2009. The number of very elderly people in a caring role is noteworthy as are the (mainly) female majority of carers.

**TABLE 13
RECIPIENTS OF CARER'S ALLOWANCE, BENEFIT AND RESPITE CARE GRANT 2009**

Age	Carer's Allowance			Carer's Benefit			Respite Care Grant		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Under 25 yrs	136	573	709	2	13	15	13	2	15
25 - 44 yrs	2,294	13,757	16,051	131	835	966	399	41	440
45 - 54 yrs	2,739	9,337	12,076	108	474	582	994	156	1,150
55 - 64 yrs	2,352	7,853	10,205	82	256	338	1,377	225	1,602
65 yrs and over	2,363	6,855	9,218	6	9	15	1,907	829	2,736
of which over 75 yrs	728	1,687	2,415	0	0	0	658	431	1,089
Total Recipients	9,884	38,339	48,223	329	1,587	1,916	4,690	1,253	5,943

Source: Statistical Information on Social Welfare Services 2009, Department of Social and Family Affairs

ACTIONS 2010

36. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2010:

36.1 Department of Social Protection

Carers' Allowances

- In Budget 2010, the weekly rate of carer's allowance for carers aged over 66 was maintained at €239. The rate of the annual Respite Care Grant was also maintained at €1,700. The rate of

carer's allowance for a person under 66 years of age was reduced by €8.50 to €212. Carer's Benefit for a person under 66 years of age was reduced by €8.20 to €213.

- However, since the introduction of the carer's allowance in 1990 payments to carers have been significantly increased and expanded. Carer's allowance was increased between 2007 and 2009 by a cumulative 21.9 per cent. As a result, even with the reduction announced in Budget 2010 for carers aged under 66, the weekly rate of payment for the Carer's allowance was still almost 20 per cent higher in 2010 than in 2006 and more than 147 per cent higher than in 1997.
- Carers were identified as a priority theme under the 'Economic and Social Disadvantage Category' in the Dormant Accounts allocation for 2007. The focus of the carer's measure is to provide training to assist carers in undertaking their caring role. The Department of Social Protection is the lead Department for this measure and the funding is being channelled through the Department's Vote. Pobal are administering the measure on behalf of the Department and are responsible for the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the programme.
- Twelve groups were approved for funding in December 2008 totalling €1.48 million from 2009-2011. The largest allocations were made to the Carers Association (€572,000) and Caring for Carers Ireland (€232,000). As of December 2010 funding of €933,827 had been paid to groups (€392,248 in 2009 and €541,579 in 2010).
- An inter-Departmental working group led by the Department of the Taoiseach was established to develop the National Carers' Strategy. However, despite the work undertaken by the working group during 2008, the economic situation had changed and remains severely constrained by the fiscal difficulties facing the economy. Rather than producing a document which did not include any significant plans for the future, the Government decided not to publish a strategy.

36.2 HSE

Residential Care

- The Nursing Homes Support Scheme, which ensures that long-term nursing home care is affordable and accessible for those who require it, commenced in October 2009. This addressed several of the objectives set out in *Towards 2016*, e.g.
 - There should be appropriate and equitable levels of co-payment by care recipients based on a national standardised financial assessment,
 - The level of state support for residential care should be indifferent as to whether that care is in a public or private facility,
 - No current resident of a nursing home, public or private, should be put at a disadvantage by whatever new co-payment arrangements for residential care are introduced.

Community Services

- The National Recovery Plan 2011-2014 provides for the following measure to be implemented over the period 2012-2014:

"Building upon the success of the Fair Deal Scheme, the introduction of an approach to community support for older people which takes need and financial means into account on a nationally consistent basis".

- The Department of Health and Children, in consultation with the HSE, is currently working on proposals to ensure that access to long-term community services is provided on a nationally consistent and equitable basis having regard to each person's care needs and means.
- Respite and day care services are provided in older person's settings and special needs settings. Day centres at local level provide support to carers.

Objective 6-A
To reduce the numbers of women experiencing poverty

CONTEXT

37. There is significant evidence to show that women are more exposed to the risk of poverty than their male counterparts. This may be caused by one or more of a number of factors. By taking time out of the workforce to raise children, women can affect their long term income level and pension entitlement. Women are more likely to become lone parents, frequently experiencing a reduction in family income and ultimately pension entitlement.
38. The three main Irish indicators of poverty are: at-risk-of-poverty (below 60% of median disposable income, equivalised to take into account household size), material deprivation (lack of two of the eleven defined basic necessities) and the overlap of the two, known as consistent poverty. Consistent poverty is the indicator used to set national poverty targets.
39. The national poverty target, which is set out in the National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007-2016, is to reduce the rate of consistent poverty to between two to four per cent by 2012 and to eliminate it by 2016. This target applies across the lifecycle, including for both men and women.
40. The EU poverty target as set out in the Europe 2020 Strategy (see Chapter 2 for further detail) is to lift at least twenty million people out of the risk of poverty and exclusion across the EU by 2020. Ireland's contribution to this target is to lift at least 186,000 people out of the risk of poverty and exclusion by 2016, using 2008 as the baseline year.
41. The latest poverty statistics relating to women were published in November 2010 and relate to 2009. The percentage of women in consistent poverty in 2009 was 5.4%, representing an increase of 0.9% on the 2008 level. The percentage of those within single parent families in consistent poverty in 2009 was 16.6%, down from 17.8% in 2008, 18.3% in 2007 and 32% in 2006. Figures from the Department of Social Protection suggest that approximately 98% of those in receipt of the lone parent's payment are female.
42. Table 14 below reviews the profile of the population who are at risk of poverty or in consistent poverty by households headed by a man or by a woman in the years 2008 and 2009:

TABLE 14
PROFILE OF THE POPULATION WHO ARE AT RISK OF POVERTY AND IN CONSISTENT POVERTY
BY SEX OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD 2008 AND 2009

	2008			2009		
	% of households by sex of head	% of households at risk of poverty by sex of head	% of households in consistent poverty by sex of head	% of households by sex of head	% of households at risk of poverty by sex of head	% of households in consistent poverty by sex of head
Male	63.8	58.1	46.5	62.1	54.1	51.9
Female	36.2	41.9	53.5	37.9	45.9	48.1

Including all social transfers, 60 % median income threshold.

Source: Extract from Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) in Ireland 2009, CSO

43. These statistics suggest that there was an increase in the "at risk of poverty" rate in households headed by a woman between 2008 and 2009, while the percentage of households headed by a woman which were in consistent poverty decreased by 5.4 percentage points over the same period. The table shows that, while 37.9 per cent of all households were led by a woman in 2009, these households accounted for almost 46 per cent of those at risk of poverty and almost 49 per cent of those in consistent poverty. A comparison with 2008 data shows an increase of 1.7 percentage points in the number of households led by a woman. Furthermore, while there was a decrease in the number of female-led households in consistent poverty, there was a significant increase in the number of female led households at risk of poverty.
44. The CSO's 2009 EU Survey on Income and Living Conditions noted that

- *Households headed by a female have lower levels of disposable income and higher poverty rates than those headed by a male;*
- *The annual disposable income of households headed by a female in 2009 was €39,413, whereas male-headed households had an annual disposable income of €50,570, more than 28% higher than female-headed households;*
- *"At risk of poverty" rates showed no significant change between 2008 and 2009 for either male or female-headed households. Female-headed households had a higher at risk of poverty rate (17.1%) than male-headed households (12.3%);*
- *There was an increase in the consistent poverty rate for female-headed households, from 4.5% in 2008 to 5.4% in 2009, while the consistent poverty rate for male-headed households increased from 4.0% in 2008 to 5.5% in 2009.*

ACTIONS 2010

45. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2010:

45.1 Social welfare payment rates

- Over the period 2007 – 2010 the rate of Widows (contributory) pension has increased from €209.30 to €230.30 (aged 66 or over) and from €191.30 to €201.50 (aged under 66) per week.
- Since 2007, the Qualified Adult payment has increased from €173.00 to €206.30 (aged 66 or over) and the current rate of State Pension (non-contributory) is €219.00.
- The Government discussion paper “Proposals for Supporting Lone Parents” put forward proposals to tackle obstacles to employment for lone parents and other low income families. These included proposals for the extension of the National Employment Action Plan to focus on lone parents, focused provision of childcare and the introduction of a new social assistance payment for low income families with young children. It has not been possible to progress the proposals as outlined in the Government discussion paper, including the abolition of qualified adults in social assistance, due, in part, to current economic conditions. These proposals have, however, informed the reforms made to the One-Parent Family Payment contained in the Social Welfare (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2010.
- From 2007, in the case of new claimants the Increase for Qualified Adult is paid directly to the qualified adult (unless they decide otherwise). This is in line with a specific recommendation in the National Women’s Strategy that women should be able to easily access independent payments within the social welfare system.

45.2 Social Inclusion

- The latest poverty statistics relating to women were published in November 2010 and relate to 2009. The statistics have been analysed above. The data for 2010 is due for publication in November 2011.
- Ireland’s National Programme for the European year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2010) was implemented over the course of the calendar year 2010. The National Programme included:
 - Crosscutting themes reflecting the priorities for social inclusion set down in the National Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion report for the EU namely: child poverty, access to quality work and learning opportunities with a focus on lone parents, parents of larger families, and parents living in areas of urban and rural disadvantage, access to services for older people and people with disabilities.
 - Specific themes relating to marginalised groups and areas such as urban and rural disadvantage, migration and ethnic minorities, travellers and homelessness and a

technical focus related to monitoring and evaluation processes including Poverty Impact Assessment, measuring poverty, indicators and data availability, and research.

Objective 6-B
To reduce the numbers of female lone parents who experience poverty

CONTEXT

46. The CSO Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) for 2009 noted that nearly two-thirds of persons living in lone parent households (62.9%) reported experiencing at least one of the eleven deprivation indicators and 44.1% experienced two or more deprivation indicators, with 18.4% reporting an inability to afford heating at some stage in the previous twelve months.

TABLE 15
NUMBER OF RECIPIENTS OF ONE-PARENT FAMILY PAYMENT BY
STATUS OF PARENT, AGE AND SEX, 2009

Age Group	Unmarried Parent, Separated Parent, Prisoner's Spouse		Widowed Person		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Under 20 yrs	2	1,520	0	0	2	1,520
20 to 24 yrs	26	12,594	0	3	26	12,597
25 to 44 yrs	1,046	62,924	49	382	1,095	63,306
45 to 54 yrs	580	9,628	62	288	642	9,916
55 to 64 yrs	154	1,025	42	147	196	1,172
Aged 65 yrs and over	3	4	0	5	3	9
Total	1,811	87,695	153	825	1,964	88,520
Overall Total	89,506		978		90,484	
Women as % of Total	98%		84.3%		97.8%	

Source: Statistical Information on Social Welfare Services 2009, Department of Social Protection

47. Table 15 gives statistics from the Department of Social Protection which show that women predominate as recipients of D/SP family support payments as unmarried and separated parents, accounting for some 98 per cent of recipients of these payments.

ACTIONS 2010

48. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2010:

48.1 Department of Social Protection

- The value for money review on Child Income Supports policies and associated spending programmes was published in November 2010. The review was initiated in 2009 and was undertaken over a period of 18 months by the Department of Social Protection under the supervision of a Steering Group and chaired by an external chairperson. The review covered policy around Child Benefit, Qualified Child Increases and the Family Income Supplement payments as well as aspects of the Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance and the Early Childcare Supplement.
- The review considered a range of previous proposals to reform these supports (e.g. means-testing or taxing Child Benefit, refundable child tax credits, second-tier child income support payments) noting the policy, legal and logistical difficulties that would have to be overcome.
- The report defined the objectives of child income support and found that it is likely that a "mixed" strategy where the level of support to low-income households is made up of both universal payments and selective payments of roughly the same value will provide for the optimal achievement of these objectives.
- The report establishes a broader policy context for more detailed work around the Family Income Supplement payment itself and its twin role in both child and working age income support.

- The results of the review are now being considered and consultation will take place with interested parties.
- The Department of Social Protection has introduced changes to the One-Parent Family Payment in the Social Welfare (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2010. For new customers, from April 2011, the One-Parent Family Payment will be paid until the youngest child in the family reaches the age of 14 years. For existing recipients of the payment, there will be a six-year phasing-out period to enable recipients to access education and training and to prepare them for their return to the labour market.
- Special provisions will be made for families with children to whom the Domiciliary Care Allowance is paid and for recently bereaved families (both married, in a civil partnership and co-habiting).
- These changes will bring Ireland's support for lone parents more in line with international provisions, where there is a general movement away from long-term and passive income support.
- In 2010, the combined value of child income supports (standard definition of Child Benefit plus Qualified Child Increases) was equivalent to 32.9% of the minimum adult social welfare payment rate, while the wider definition (which includes Back to School Clothing and Footwear Allowance) was equivalent to 34.8% of the main adult rate. These values were broadly in line with the NAP Inclusion target that the combined value of child income support measures be maintained at 33% to 35% of the minimum adult Social Welfare payment rate.

48.2 Equality Authority

The Equality Authority has begun to fund a project led by One Family, in partnership with Retail Ireland, Marks and Spencer, Superquinn and Boots, which is developing a best-practice toolkit for employing lone parents in the retail sector.

48.3 Evaluation of the FÁS Social Inclusion Model

- The FÁS Social Inclusion Model was developed to address issues faced by specific client groups that have little knowledge of, or interaction with, FÁS services. The model involves a six-stage customer-focused approach in meeting the needs of target client groups utilising, where necessary, existing FÁS delivery systems and processes.
- The piloting of this model sought to address the barriers identified that were preventing lone parents from accessing education and training opportunities. Key action points in the pilot included the development and implementation of an innovative communications strategy including out-reach recruitment; the training of frontline staff on the situation and experiences of lone parents, the provision of childcare and family-friendly support services; the provision of individual client-centred support and the provision of support for those in employment.
- The pilot also involved working with major stakeholders, including organisations representing and interacting with lone parents so that FÁS could more proactively engage with these groups. A multi-agency steering group comprising FÁS, the Department of Social Protection and organisations representing service providers and lone parents was established to oversee the implementation of this pilot. Operationally, the main focus of the pilot was the provision of a 10-week 'Paving your way to work' career guidance programme to 60 participants in Finglas and in Tallaght. The programme included eight weeks of training centre-based tuition and two weeks of work experience.
- The data indicated highly satisfactory outcomes for the vast majority of participants in the pilot. Fifty-eight participants started the programme and 54 finished the programme. A total of 53 participants took part in the two week work placement part of the course. Table 16 overleaf shows that 47 participants had registered for further training and in many cases had identified a number of different training or education options to pursue. Four participants had found employment and 2 participants registered for Community Employment. A total of four participants have started their

own business and in some cases have also registered for a FÁS Start Your Own Business training course.

TABLE 16
SUMMARY OF OUTCOMES FOR PILOT PROGRAMME PARTICIPANTS OF
FAS SOCIAL INCLUSION MODEL

Factor	Summary of outcomes for pilot programme participants				
	Finglas 1	Tallaght 1	Finglas 2	Tallaght 2	Total
Participants starting programme	15	15	13	15	58
Participants finishing programme	13	14	13	14	54
Undertook work placements	13	14	13	13	53
Registered for further training	13	12	13	9	47
Registered for further education	—	—	—	1	1
Employed	—	4	—	—	4
Registered for CE	2	—	—	2	4
Starting own Business	2	1	—	1	4
Exploring future options	—	—	—	2	2
Volunteering	—	2	—	—	2

- The results of the pilot indicate that the social inclusion model has the potential to be used with lone parents in other regions and with other marginalised groups that do not currently engage with FÁS services. The Social Inclusion Unit is currently reviewing the findings and recommendations of the Evaluation of the Social Inclusion Model.

48.4 One Family Special Initiative

- In 2010, the Social Inclusion Unit engaged with One Family to pilot and fund a *New Futures* programme – a regional pilot similar to the Social Inclusion Model. This programme was designed specifically for lone parents in response to the Government’s programme of activation. One Family worked with Galway City Partnership to deliver this programme and was supported by the Equality for Women Measure (EWM). The aim of the initiative was to test the *New Futures* programme in a regional area and train interagency partners in its delivery by providing the learning needed to allow for the mainstreaming of the programme on a regional basis.
- The objective of the programme was to support fourteen lone parents in receipt of a social welfare payment to gain the skills and confidence necessary to develop individual career action plans for labour market progression and ‘realise the first step on their action plans after engaging in the service provided’ (Operational Report, October 2010). Twelve of the fourteen participants in the pilot progressed to education, training or employment and thirteen participants completed the training programme.

Objective 6-C

To reduce the numbers of women experiencing poverty by increasing pension cover

CONTEXT

49. As mentioned previously, periods away from the labour market among women can increase their risk of poverty. This also can influence their pension entitlement in later years. Accordingly the Pensions Board has actively engaged in awareness raising to encourage people to consider their pension needs at an early age.
50. In 2007, the Pensions Board published a comprehensive book entitled “Women and Pensions” which describes the ways in which women can provide financial security for themselves and their dependants in retirement. It addresses issues of particular interest to women such as maternity leave, career breaks and re-entering the workforce. It is worth noting that the CSO Women and Men in Ireland Report for 2010 notes that in 2008 50% of women in employment in Ireland had no pension provision other than the State pension. In 2008, only 7% of women in Ireland had a personal pension, compared with 18% of men.

51. ACTIONS 2010

The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2010:

51.1 Department of Social Protection

- Since 2007, the Qualified Adult payment has increased from €173.00 to €206.30 (aged 66 or over) per week.
- An information leaflet, 'Working with your spouse: how it affects your social welfare contributions and entitlements', was published in 2008 to set out the social welfare and tax implications of families co-working in a shared business. The leaflet clarifies that spouses who operate in a commercial partnership may be brought into the social insurance system, subject to certain criteria. In this way, both spouses incur a liability to pay self-employed PRSI and build up entitlement towards a contributory state pension and other benefits.
- The National Pensions Framework was published in March 2010. A Steering Group overseeing its implementation and a State Pensions Sub-Group were established to progress State Pension key milestones.
- The rate of payment for those aged over 66 was maintained in Budget 2010.

51.2 Pensions Board

- Women are a specific target group under the Pensions Board's National Pensions Awareness Campaign.

CHAPTER 4

THEME TWO - ENSURING THE WELLBEING OF WOMEN

INTRODUCTION

1. It will be recalled that the National Women's Strategy makes mention of the WHO definition of "health" as "a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing". Accordingly, this Theme links a number of very different objectives, relating to topics as diverse as work/life balance and sport while also including a number of issues which can impact negatively on the lives of women, such as domestic violence and trafficking.
2. As noted previously, issues such as the sharing of family responsibilities, violence against women and human trafficking have been the focus of significant bodies of work at the EU, Council of Europe and the United Nations in recent years. In relation to the latter two topics, new Conventions at the Council of Europe provide structures to enable CoE Member States to achieve optimal provisions.

Objective 7

To enhance the work/life balance for women

CONTEXT

3. This objective reflects the ongoing debate at EU level about the need to address inequalities which persist in the sharing of family and caring responsibilities between women and men. A Ministerial Conference convened under the German Presidency in 2007 which focused on this topic led to the approval of European Council Conclusions which included a recommendation that Member States

promote effective policies to reconcile work, family and private life that do not compel women and men to choose between family and work or to prioritise one to the detriment of the other, in order to encourage the fulfilment of the employment goals of the Lisbon Strategy, particularly with regard to access to permanent employment and good working conditions...

4. During 2009, the National Women's Council of Ireland published the outcomes of a research project it had undertaken with funding from EU PROGRESS on the topic of women's role as carers⁷. The study looked at previously published data⁸ on women's time use which had shown that women still play the major role (80 per cent plus) of the tasks of family life - supervision of children, cleaning, cooking and adult care. This impacts on work/life balance. The NWCI comments in its Report that

Providing care involves energy, time and effort. It can be rewarding, but can also be a burden. Time invested in providing care is time that cannot be spent doing other things - working, studying, recreation and participating in social and political life. People who provide high levels of care can experience stress and exhaustion, potentially damaging their own health.

This is why the way in which care work is divided between men and women is so important. Fairly shared, both sexes have the opportunity to fully realise their potential. But the majority of care work is done by women. Women's disproportionate investment in care work generates substantial benefits for those they care for, but at a cost to themselves - women remain less economically independent and under-represented in decision-making.

We all lose out from an unfair sharing of caring. Men miss the opportunity to benefit from the rewards of providing care. Women sacrifice the opportunity to achieve economic independence

⁷ NWCI: Who Cares, Challenging the Myths about Gender and Care in Ireland: 2009

⁸ ESRI/DJELR: Time Use in Ireland 2005

and to contribute to shaping the world we live in. Care is essential and integral to our lives, but unless care work is more equally shared between women and men, our society and economy will be the poorer for it.

5. The European Commission in its 2009 Annual Report to the European Council on Gender Equality notes in particular that

Reconciliation policies are key responses to long-term economic and demographic challenges, and should therefore be reinforced to stimulate growth. A better work-life balance for both women and men requires a more equitable share of time spent on paid and unpaid work. Women's time is more tied up in domestic and family responsibilities than is the case for men. Reconciliation measures need to target men too, since the promotion of gender equality implies changes and new opportunities for both sexes.

- *The development of affordable, accessible and quality care services for children and other dependants will allow more women to enter and remain in the labour market and to facilitate the work-life balance of both women and men.*
- *Reconciliation policies need to allow for individual choices for both women and men as regards flexible working and leave arrangements. Measures such as paternity leave can encourage men to share parenting and other care responsibilities equally with women.*
- *Reconciliation policies need to be implemented at all levels in the workplace, so that a more equitable use of women's and men's time becomes the norm and attitudes to both women's and men's need to balance work and family life are better attuned.*
- *The proposals reviewing the two directives on maternity leave and rights of self-employed women need to be adopted swiftly by the legislator. They represent a concrete contribution to improving work-life balance in the EU.*

6. As previously mentioned in Chapter 2 on International developments, the European Commission's ***Women's Charter***, launched in March 2010, and the Commission's new ***Strategy for Equality between women and men 2010-2015*** both have equality in the labour market and equal economic independence for women and men as priority areas for action. The reconciliation of work, family and private life is an essential component in enabling women to achieve equality in the labour market. The Commission Strategy recognises that women continue to shoulder a disproportionate level of family and domestic responsibilities, which may contribute to limiting career progression. In its Strategy the Commission commits, as one of its key areas for action, to "*assess remaining gaps in entitlement to family-related leave, notably paternity leave and carers' leave, and the options for addressing them*".

7. A proposal by the European Commission for an amendment to Directive 92/85/EEC to increase the statutory provision of maternity leave in the European Union from 14 weeks to 18 weeks has been under discussion at a Council Working Group for some time. It is worth noting that Irish provision in relation to maternity leave already exceeds the provisions in the European Commission proposal. Women in Ireland can currently avail of up to 42 weeks maternity leave of which 26 weeks attracts a payment and they may opt to take up to 16 weeks of additional unpaid leave for each confinement.

8. This proposal is subject to the co-decision of the European Parliament, which voted in October 2010 to extend the provisions for maternity leave to 20 weeks and to introduce paternity leave of 2 weeks, both on full pay. These proposed amendments represent a significant extension of the proposals previously considered at EU level. The issue now falls to be discussed again by the Council of Ministers. Examination of the proposal continued at Working Group level under the Belgian Presidency with a progress report submitted to the ESPHCA Council in December 2010. It is expected that the proposal will continue to be examined during the Hungarian Presidency in the first half of 2011.

9. The Commission had also proposed the extension of maternity cover to self-employed women and assisting spouses. ***Council Directive 2010/41/EU on the application of the principle of equal treatment between women and men engaged in an activity in a self-employed capacity and repealing Council Directive 86/613/EEC*** was published on 7 July 2010. It provides for 14 weeks maternity leave for female self-employed workers and assisting spouses. Ireland, in common with other Member States must transpose the Directive within two years.

ACTIONS 2010

10. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2010:

10.1 EU Developments

- **Council Directive 2010/18/EU** (Parental Leave Directive) was published in March 2010. The Directive implements the revised Framework Agreement on parental leave concluded by the European Social Partners (including IBEC and ICTU) and repeals Directive 96/34/EC. The main features of the new Directive are as follows:
 - Each parent will be granted four months parental leave instead of three months and at least one month of this leave will be non-transferable. Currently under Irish legislation if both parents work for the same employer, and the employer agrees, one parent may transfer all of their leave entitlement to the other parent;
 - This leave will now apply to workers on fixed term contracts and agency workers;
 - Member States are required to assess the need to adjust the conditions for access and application of parental leave to the needs of parents of children with a disability or a long-term illness. Currently under Irish legislation the parents of a child with a disability can take parental leave up until the child is sixteen;
 - The right to request changes to your working hours or working pattern on return from parental leave which the employer must consider and respond to but is not obliged to grant;
 - The new Directive provides for an assessment of the needs for additional measures to address the specific needs of adoptive parents. Ireland currently provides parental leave for adoptive parents.
- Ireland has two years to transpose this Directive. This will require amending legislation with regard to the Parental Leave Acts 1998 and 2006.

10.2 HSE/Equality Authority

- The 'Pregnancy at Work' research project commissioned by the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme in partnership with the Equality Authority progressed in 2010. The findings will help to inform the important role of policy in mediating the effects of childbirth and childcare on women's employment. The findings will be published in 2011.

10.3 Department of Social Protection

- The 'Review of the Application of the Unemployment Benefit & Assistance Schemes Conditions to workers who are not employed on a full-time basis' examined the application of the jobseeker's schemes to part-time, casual and systematic short-time workers.
- The review made a number of recommendations which are under active consideration within the Department of Social Protection.

10.4 National Framework Committee on Work Life Balance

- In 2010, the National Framework Committee continued to prioritise support for organisations interested in exploring alternative working arrangements for their employees in response to deteriorating economic conditions. Due to the current national economic situation a decision was made to end the Panel of Consultants Scheme at the end of 2010.

- In 2010, a decision was made to wind up the National Framework Committee for Work/Life Balance Policies. A decision was also made that the WLB website be closed down and that the information be placed on the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Innovation's website.

Objective 8-A
To improve the health status of women in Ireland through gender focused policies

CONTEXT

11. The Women's Health Council has actively fostered the development of health policy to maximise health for women in Ireland and to foster gender-focused health policies. Following the reorganisation of some of the State Agencies in 2009, the Council was integrated into the Department of Health and Children on 1st October 2009.

ACTIONS 2010

12. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2010:
- In 2010, the HSE finalised and approved a Health Inequalities Framework. A key component of the framework in terms of addressing health inequalities is addressing gender as a core determinant of health. The HSE has entered into a partnership with the National Women's Council of Ireland to explore gender mainstreaming within a health service context and to develop a robust tool which can be used by HSE staff at all levels when considering gender. For example; to ensure gender proofing mechanisms are taken into account in the planning, implementation and evaluation of all health policies. The Women's Health Officers will also participate in the development of the Gender Mainstreaming Initiative.
 - In 2010, the HSE finalised the Health Promotion Strategic Framework. A "Setting" Model has been adopted by the HSE in terms of the implementation of the Framework. The three key settings are Health Service, Education and Community. The current structures pertaining to women's health will be reoriented in this context.

Objective 8-B
To improve the physical health status of women in Ireland

CONTEXT

13. Education and awareness raising about health and prevention strategies, fitness, good diet, taking part in fitness and sports programmes and mass sports events e.g. women's mini marathon.

ACTIONS 2010

14. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2010:

14.1 **HSE**

Information from the Strategy on Older People:

- A dedicated Elder Abuse Service has been established in the HSE which responds to complaints of elder abuse, including referrals made concerning women who are generally accepted to be at greater risk of suffering from abuse.
- Work is continuing on the development of a National Positive Ageing Strategy which will impact on the lives of all people, including women, as they age.

Improve cancer screening and services for women

- The National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP) has established 8 symptomatic breast centres (with one satellite centre). Breast cancer diagnostic and surgical services are now delivered in the following major teaching hospitals:
 - Cork University Hospital

- Waterford Regional Hospital
 - Galway University Hospital (+ attached Letterkenny General Hospital satellite centre)
 - Limerick Regional Hospital
 - Mater Hospital, Dublin
 - Beaumont Hospital, Dublin
 - St. James's Hospital, Dublin
 - St. Vincent's Hospital, Dublin
- All patients with any breast symptom are referred to and managed at one of these 8 (+1) centres.
 - General practitioners have been issued with referral guidelines and with standardised referral forms. Most patient referrals are now made via these standardised forms. GPs have also been provided with the option to refer patients electronically through their own practice management software systems. Using the electronic referral format, the GP receives an automated acknowledgement of the referral from the specialist centre and a clinical response. GPs receive a clinical response within 5 working days. Education programmes have been put in place for GPs and primary care nurses. Guidelines on the management of breast pain have also been issued to GPs.
 - The Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA – the national standards agency) has set standards for the performance of the specialist centres (e.g. around access and quality of care -. urgent patients are seen within two weeks of the referral). These standards are monitored and monthly performance reports are provided to the NCCP. In turn, performance statistics are submitted by the NCCP for each centre to HIQA where they are published and open to public scrutiny. A target of 95 per cent is set against performance criteria.
 - There are approximately 2,700 breast cancers diagnosed in Ireland each year. Each of the specialist centres serves a population of 500,000. Each centre diagnoses a critical number of patients to justify its specialist designation.
 - Triple assessment is provided to patients on their first appointment. The NCCP has developed a Programmatic approach to the delivery of radiotherapy services. It has recently opened two new centres in Dublin (in Beaumont and St James's Hospitals).

BreastCheck

- BreastCheck was established in 1998 as a specialist agency to provide Ireland's first quality assured, population-based breast screening programme for women aged 50 to 64. Governance of BreastCheck was transferred to the Board of the National Cancer Screening Service (NCSS) on its establishment in January 2007. The aim of BreastCheck is to detect breast cancer at the earliest possible stage.
- Breast screening commenced in the South and West in 2007. By October 2009, BreastCheck had begun screening in all remaining counties in these areas. The first round screening of all eligible women in these areas will be completed in 2011. BreastCheck screened approximately 118,846 women in 2010.

CervicalCheck

- A successful National Cervical Screening Programme has the potential to cut current incidence rates from cervical cancer by up to 80% in Ireland. The NCSS launched CervicalCheck – The National Cervical Screening Programme on 01 September 2008 and provides free smear tests to women aged 25 to 60.
- CervicalCheck became available to over 1.1 million women aged 25 to 60 on 1 September 2008. The CervicalCheck Programme Report published in 2010 reported that over 284,800 women were screened during the period 1 September 2008 to 31 August 2009. CervicalCheck screened approximately 250,834 women in 2010.

Study of cancer care for older women

- Subject recruitment and interviewing has been completed on the study on the treatment of older women with cancer in Ireland; data analysis and interpretation is ongoing. Interviews performed included 28 Cancer Nurse Specialists, 15 consultants treating women with cancer and 38 patients older and younger than 65 years diagnosed with breast, colon and ovarian cancer. Analysis of the national survey of consultants treating women with cancer has been completed and the manuscript is in preparation.

Reduction in the number of women dying from cardiovascular disease

- Cardiovascular disease, stroke and peripheral vascular disease are the subject of a new CVD Policy launched by the Minister for Health and Children in 2010.
- Access to a dietetic clinical service through Heartwatch and primary care is provided to both women and men.
- Support is provided to women in the management of CVD in clinical work as per the Irish College of General Practitioners Guidelines (ICGP).
- Health information training is provided on cardiovascular disease risk factors for women to Care Attendants on FETAC Level 5 Certificate in Health Service Skills in the Tullamore School of Nursing Centre.
- A Community Cardiovascular Programme has been developed and is delivered to community groups and their providers within the Longford/Westmeath Area to increase their awareness about the incidence of cardiovascular disease to the providers and their target group.
- Awareness raising about the incidence of cardiovascular disease among women is facilitated through all women's health training programmes, for both women and health care providers.
- A Community Cardiovascular Programme has been developed and is delivered with emphasis placed on the signs and symptoms of CVD and risk factors based on the findings of the SLAN Report (2007).
- Diagnostic measures centre around awareness of modalities of presentation in men and women with women being on average 10 years older at presentation. There are no specific diagnostic tests which should be applied to one gender over another.
- The gender differences in prescribing of certain medications and in the use of some interventions have been explored. The Directorate of Quality and Clinical Care plan to target attention to improving care for patients with Acute Coronary Syndromes in 2011.
- In terms of increasing access to cardiac rehabilitation programmes among women, a study in Dublin showed that the apparent difference disappeared on further analysis, revealing that age rather than gender was the key factor in the difference in invitation rates to cardiac rehabilitation. This reflects the fact that women are older on presentation and are treated similarly to men of the same age. Cardiac rehabilitation has not been protected from budgetary problems and the situation may have altered from the time of that study around the country. Cardiac rehabilitation is offered to both men and women at several centres throughout the country.

Objective 8-C

To improve the reproductive and sexual health status of women in Ireland

CONTEXT

15. Since its establishment in 2001, the Crisis Pregnancy Agency has worked closely with Government Departments and Agencies to reduce the incidence of crisis pregnancy in Ireland.

16. Statistics published by the British Department of Health in May 2010 show that the numbers of women who gave an Irish address when obtaining an abortion in Britain fell from 6,673 in 2001 to 4,422 in 2009. It is recognised that some women go to other European countries and the Agency works with a number of countries to gather statistics to enable it to have the fullest picture. From its research, the Agency has found that the Netherlands is the only other country to which women resident in Ireland travel in significant numbers. Accordingly there appears to be quite a significant decrease in the number of women from Ireland who are availing of abortion as a solution to a crisis pregnancy. The estimated abortion rate (number of abortions per 1,000 women aged 15-44) has fallen from 7.5 in 2001 to 4.4 in 2009.

ACTIONS 2010

17. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2010:

17.1 HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme

- The Crisis Pregnancy Agency was integrated into the Health Service Executive in line with the objectives of the Health Service Reform Programme and Government policy on agency rationalisation on 1st January 2010. (The Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009 (Commencement (No. 3) Order 2009). The Agency, now called the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme, is situated within the new Integrated Services Directorate of the HSE as a national programme. The HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme will function as a Unit within the HSE's Children and Families Directorate in order to conclude its current Strategy.

Developing a framework to ensure equity of access to contraception services for women

- The HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme has developed a range of information resources on fertility, contraception and sexual health matters for women throughout their life-course.

Adolescent Women

- www.B4udecide.ie is a new education initiative that aims to encourage young people (aged 14 to 16) to make healthy, responsible decisions about relationships and sexual health. In 2010, over 80,000 people visited the b4udecide.ie website. Lesson plans for 2nd level teachers and session plans for youth workers were developed in 2010, and are due to be disseminated in 2011. In addition, in 2010 the CPP funded the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) to conduct twenty nationwide training courses for youth workers on delaying early sex.
- In 2010, 450 sexual health information packs were distributed to teachers and youth workers who were participating in relationships and sexuality education training courses organised through the NYCI and the DES Regional Managers for SPHE. A further 100 were distributed to foster carers at conferences organised by the Irish Foster Carer's Association.

Women in Early Adulthood

- The 'Think Contraception' Campaign, aimed at women and men aged 18-24, contains information on fertility, contraception and sexual health. The campaign is well recognised among the target audience and has maintained awareness levels of approx 80% since 2002. The website www.thinkcontraception.ie received 90,000 visits in 2010. Mass dissemination of 'Think Contraception Protection Packs' (which includes a sexual health leaflet and a condom) took place in various locations around the country including the Oxegen music festival, colleges, universities, pubs and clubs. Think Contraception sexual health leaflets were also disseminated to a number of pharmacists.

Women aged 35-55

- 'Contraception 35-55' is a leaflet on contraception, fertility and sexual health information aimed at women aged between 35 and 55. Large scale dissemination of this leaflet took place through pharmacists, GP surgeries and at the National Ploughing Championships.
- The HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme continues to strategically invest in research to implement evidence informed approaches to communications and information campaigns, policy and service provision. 'The Irish Contraception and Crisis Pregnancy Study 2' initiated in 2010 is a

major quantitative study on attitudes, knowledge and experiences of sexual risk-taking and crisis pregnancy which will allow comparisons with ICCP 1. A second study commissioned in 2010 is 'Attitudes to Fertility, Sexual Health and Motherhood among a Sample of Non-Irish National Ethnic Minority Women Living in Ireland' which will provide qualitative data to inform information gaps around the fertility, contraceptive use, crisis pregnancy experience and sexual health of a sample of non-Irish women living in Ireland.

- In 2010, the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme continued to work with the ICGP in funding a three year accredited training pilot programme for GPs in Long Acting Reversible Contraception (LARC). The pilot programme is the first of its kind in Ireland and aims to work towards the development of an ongoing education programme for GPs on a national basis, which will result in the award of an Advanced Certificate in Family Planning. The aim is to increase quality of, access to and safety of contraceptive services for patients. The three year pilot is due to be completed in 2011.

Access to information on fertility, contraception and sexual health matters

- Mass dissemination of the Crisis Pregnancy Programme's resource 'Contraception 35-55', which provides information on sexual and reproductive health issues for women between the ages of 35 and 55, including menstrual cycle changes, fertility changes and the peri-menopause. This was the most popular HSE CPP resource disseminated by www.healthpromotion.ie in 2010. Approximately 20,000 were disseminated to health professionals including GPs and pharmacists. The leaflet was also distributed at the HSE's health promotion tent at the National Ploughing Championships.

17.2 Department of Education and Skills

Relationships and Sexuality Education Resources

- Social Personal and Health Education, which includes relationships and sexuality education, is a mandatory programme in primary and junior cycle education. In senior cycle, all schools are required to provide an RSE programme. The Department issued a circular in 2010 to all post primary schools reminding them of their obligations in this area and of the training and resources available. An SPHE Journal focussing specifically on Relationships and Sexuality Education was finalised in electronic form in 2010. It was made available on the SPHE website in electronic form for all post primary schools.
- RSE Resource materials are available for all year groups, other resources within the school setting include the Busy Bodies DVD, Trust Me, RSE - Going Forward Together and the You Can Talk to Me.

17.3 Department of Education and Skills/ HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme

Relationships and Sexuality Education Resources

- The TRUST pack, a relationships and sexuality education (RSE) resource for senior cycle students in post –primary schools, was developed in 2008 through a partnership between the Department of Education and Science, the HSE and the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme. The resource contains lessons on human reproduction and fertility, contraceptive methods, unplanned pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and transmission and is available to SPHE teachers through TRUST training. In 2010, over 297 post-primary teachers attended TRUST training and received the pack for use in the delivery of RSE through the SPHE programme.
- In 2010, the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme disseminated 340 sexual health information packs to teachers, who participated in relationships and sexuality education training courses organised through the DES Regional Managers for SPHE.
- The Health Promotion Service in partnership with Regional Development Officers in Dept of Education supports teacher training on SPHE/RSE. The Teen Health Initiative also provides support (i.e. Baby Think It Over programme) to schools.

- Sexual Health teacher training (RSE) is provided by the youth health development officers in the North East to increase awareness and knowledge of teachers on issues affecting young people and their sexual health.
- The Schools health promotion team: Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE) is provided to all students in both primary and post primary schools through the SPHE programme up to junior cycle. RSE is provided at senior cycle level even if not part of an existing SPHE programme. Schools are also required to develop an RSE policy through a consultative process.

17.4 HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme

Ensuring that information and counselling services are available in cases of crisis pregnancy

- The 'Positive Options' campaign developed by the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme promotes the availability of free, non judgemental counselling services and has been ongoing since 2003. The campaign includes a service that allows women to receive a list of crisis pregnancy counselling services for free by texting the word 'options' to 50444. In 2010, there were approx 86,000 requests for information from the Positive Options service (via SMS requests and website visits) and approximately 50,000 visits to the www.positiveoptions.ie website. Approx 95,000 'Positive Options' materials were disseminated through crisis pregnancy counselling services, GP surgeries and colleges in 2010. The campaign was re-developed in 2010 with a newly executed TV, radio, poster and online advertising.

Increasing awareness of post-abortion medical check-ups and counselling

- The Abortion Aftercare campaign, developed by the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme, aims to raise awareness of the availability of free State-funded post-abortion medical check-up and counselling services. In 2010, services were advertised through print media, online media and the Abortion Aftercare leaflet, directing over 15,000 visits to www.abortionaftercare.ie. In research conducted at the end of 2010, approximately 34% of women said they had seen the advertising in a magazine/newspaper or in a GP surgery.

Improving access to and delivery of Crisis Pregnancy Counselling and Post-Abortion Medical and Counselling Services nationally

- Over €3 million in funding was allocated to the area of crisis pregnancy and post-termination counselling and medical checkups in 2010 by the HSE Crisis Pregnancy Programme. This funding provided for the delivery of free, non-judgemental crisis pregnancy counselling through 15 services in over 50 locations throughout Ireland. To ensure a high standard in service delivery, funding was provided to improve standards through training and supervision and for the ongoing delivery of the Crisis Pregnancy Counselling Skills Course with the National University of Ireland Maynooth and associated alumnae seminar.

17.5 HSE Maternity and Gynaecological Care

Development of Guidelines and Campaigns

- Work has commenced on each of the solution areas associated with the objectives of the HSE's Quality Clinical Care Directorate programme on Obstetrics and Gynaecology. These include increasing the number of patients attending for antenatal care for early pregnancy from 55% of total births in 2007 to 70% in 2012 and improving choice by developing and delivering new models of maternity care.
- The first guideline developed by the group, 'Ultrasound Diagnosis of Early Pregnancy Miscarriage', was finalised and released to the 19 maternity units in late 2010.
- The HSE has rolled out campaigns in 2010 pertaining to Breastfeeding and Vitamin D.
- Ongoing training and support on ante and post-natal nutrition and on infant nutrition for healthcare workers is provided on an ongoing basis.
- Maternity services consumer/staff groups set up throughout the North East to identify and implement women's priorities; e.g.

- developing women friendly protocols;
 - promote improved services for ethnic minorities;
 - funding for breastfeeding support groups;
 - providing UNICEF peer breast feeding training in collaboration with Public Health Nurses;
 - improving quality of antenatal clinics, improve waiting times and facilities; and
 - providing practical and professional advice and support to consolidate and strengthen current parent, baby and toddler support groups.
- The Menopause Guide was published in 2008 as one of the actions identified from research done by the Women’s Health Council (integrated into the Department of Health and Children in October 2009). The Manager for Information Resources in Health Promotion worked with the WHC to produce the resource and over 25,000 booklets were distributed through the storage and distribution facility of the HSE. The resource was distributed to Libraries, Citizen Information Centres, GPs, Women Centres Community and Voluntary groups and Health Promotion Departments.

Objective 8-D

To improve the mental health status of women in Ireland

CONTEXT

18. Following the publication of “A Vision for Change” by the Mental Health Commission, an independent Monitoring Group was established to review progress on its implementation. The structure of the Strategy addresses the needs of both women and men collectively with some short reference to gender specific issues such as perinatal mental health. The reports of the independent Monitoring Group to date have not made mention of gender specific initiatives.

ACTIONS 2010

19. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2010:

19.1 National Mental Health Stigma Reduction Partnership

Awareness raising, training and research:

A National Stigma Reduction Campaign ‘See Change’ was launched in April 2010 with the aim of positively changing social attitudes and behaviour, to inspire people to challenge their beliefs about mental illness and to be more open in their attitudes and behaviour and to encourage people in distress to seek help. A network of national and local organisations across the country carries the anti-stigma message through local broadcasts, local print media and a range of other activities.

19.2 HSE

During 2010, the HSE continued to deliver its two mental health awareness campaigns aimed at the general population www.yourmentalhealth.ie and at young people www.letsomeoneknow.ie.

19.3 Department of Education and Skills

Mental Health in the SPHE Programme in Schools

- An SPHE programme is implemented in all schools at primary and junior cycle levels. Its aim is to foster personal development, health and well being of children, to help them create and maintain supportive relationships, and develop the skills and attitudes for responsible citizenship.
- From the beginning of **primary** schooling, children learn, in an age-appropriate way, how to identify, explore and express feelings and emotions, how to communicate with others, to resolve conflict and to respect difference, the importance of caring for one’s body, treating oneself and

others with dignity and respect, and how to identify people, places and situations that may threaten personal safety.

- The SPHE modules at **junior cycle** deal specifically with belonging and integrating, handling conflict constructively, bullying, dealing with peer pressure, coping with stress, emotional health and well being, influences on decision-making, and relationships and sexuality education. In third year, an awareness of the range of agencies who can help students in difficulty is promoted, as well as the skills of knowing when and how to seek help.
- SPHE is designed for implementation in the context of a caring whole-school approach which is supported by the pastoral care structures in schools. Schools are also supported by the National Educational Psychological Service and post primary schools have ex-quota guidance counsellors.
- '*Working Things Out Through SPHE*' was launched in 2010 as a resource aimed at promoting the mental and emotional health of young people. It was developed by the Mater Hospital Child and Adolescent Health Service under the leadership of Professor Carol Fitzpatrick and the SPHE Support Service. The resource consists of a DVD and a number of accompanying lessons and is supported by training for teachers.

19.4 **HSE and Other Supports for Perinatal and Postnatal Depression**

- A multi disciplinary Working Group was established by the HSE West in 2008. A perinatal depression pilot project commenced in Sligo town in one GP practice in March 2009. A scoping exercise commenced regarding best practice for establishing a support group in Sligo. An awareness campaign will form part of the forthcoming action plan.
- The Irish College of General Practitioners (ICGP) Impact document on perinatal mental health was developed by the Women's Health Development Officer (HSE Dublin North East) in collaboration with the ICGP. In 2011, awareness and training sessions will be facilitated for 60 GPs and 60 practice nurses as a follow up. A multidisciplinary care pathway for the prevention and management of perinatal mental health is currently being implemented in the North East. The group was established in 2003. The work of the multidisciplinary steering group will be progressed and follow up actions by the Women's Health Development Officer include: media campaigns, Post Natal Depression training, listening skills training, service developments etc. with key personnel. A professionally facilitated postnatal support group and drop-in service is available in Dundalk in collaboration with women's health and mental health promotion.
- Multidisciplinary training programme on prevention, identification and management of perinatal depression continues to be facilitated for a range of health professionals (Public Health Nurses (PHN), midwives, student mental health nurses and social workers) and relevant community groups.
- Postnatal depression screening and evidence based interventions by PHNs and GPs are actively promoted by the women's health development officer within the North East.
- The Obstetric Liaison Mental Health Service is a nurse-led service to Cork University Maternity Hospital and forms part of the Liaison Psychiatric Service in Cork University Hospital. Typical referrals to the service are women with schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and severe depression who are already under the care of psychiatric services. The Liaison Clinical Nurse Specialist works with both the psychiatric and obstetric team to facilitate and support the woman through her journey in the maternity service. The clinical nurse specialist also routinely liaises with maternity social workers, midwives, GPs and public health nurses.
- The obstetric liaison clinical nurse specialist also offers:
 - Advice to maternity, public health nurses and mental health staff about perinatal mental health issues.
 - Education for maternity staff and public health nurses in mental health issues.
- The HSE has translated a post-natal depression booklet to languages suggested by the language hub and has distributed to health care professionals and maternity hospitals for distribution.

<p style="text-align: center;">Objective 8-E To promote healthy lifestyles for the women of Ireland</p>

CONTEXT

20. This objective links a healthy lifestyle with the achievement of optimal health.

ACTIONS 2010

21. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2010:

21.1 HSE and/or Safefood Promoting Healthy Eating

- Increasing access to healthier food choices, particularly for less well off women and women in the workplace, is still being addressed by the HSE “*Healthy Food for All*” campaign in partnership with Crosscare.
- The peer led food poverty programme “Healthy Food Made Easy” and “Cook It” are delivered across the four HSE areas.
- Organic community gardens and co-ops have been set up in Rapid areas and in some schools.
- The HSE/Irish Heart Foundation’s “*Happy Heart at Work*” offers assessments of workplace food choices, cooking practices and menu options in the workplace and awards certification to those reaching specified standards. In 2010, a total of 269 worksites were assisted in Workplace Health Promotion in both the public and private sectors.
- The National Obesity Campaign, which commenced in 2008, is a three year campaign aimed at supporting parents/guardians as positive role models for their children for healthy eating and physical activity. This is an Island of Ireland Campaign in Partnership with Safefood.
- Resources were developed to support healthy eating and physical activity with families and the Littlesteps⁹ web site is available to support families with information and ideas on being active and healthy eating. The “Little Steps Go a Long Way” media campaign in partnership with SafeFood promotes “eating well and being active”.
- X-Pert healthy eating course for diabetics is facilitated by HSE Dietitians.
- Health promotion dietetics team promote the role of nutrition and weight management in the prevention of Cancer, CVD and Diabetes Hypertension and stroke. Positive messages are promoted including reducing salt intake, the need for Vitamin D, Calcium for bone health and Folic Acid for women planning a pregnancy/pregnant women. The Health promotion dietetics team also collaborate and assist with National awareness campaigns.

21.2 HSE Promotion of Alcohol Awareness

- The HSE ran a public information campaign on underage drinking, www.yourdrinking.ie. This campaign began in 2008 and will continue into 2011. The aim of the campaign is to increase awareness about the extent of underage drinking, the ease of access which young people have to alcohol and the benefits in delaying the age at which young people start to drink.
- Media campaigns have been introduced to reduce drinking, specifically targeting women. The overall aim of the Alcohol service of the Health promotion department of the HSE Dublin North East is to prevent and reduce the incidence and prevalence of Cardiovascular disease, Cancer, Unintentional injuries, Mental health and Sexual health, all of which have alcohol misuse as a major risk factor. Efforts to prevent/ reduce alcohol misuse are achieved using the setting approach and through three separate frameworks – Community Development, health promoting hospital framework and health promoting schools framework.

⁹ www.littlesteps.eu

- The structure of these frameworks/strategies addresses the needs of both women and men collectively with some reference to gender specific issues such as alcohol and women/ pregnancy.

21.3 HSE Smoking Cessation Supports

- Work commenced on the development of a HSE Tobacco Control Framework to be delivered over a five year period. One specific action which relates to women and aims to “*Work towards the integration of services in all regions and prioritise areas of highest smoking prevalence i.e. lower socio economic areas, mental health and maternity settings when planning and delivering tobacco cessation services.*”
- Smoking Cessation services for ante natal patients are being rolled out through the major Dublin Maternity Hospitals: the Rotunda, Holles St and the Coombe, and in Drogheda, Sligo, Limerick and Cork.
- A smoking cessation service support is offered on site in Cork University Maternity Hospital for half a day one day per week. Brief interventions for smoking cessation support training are delivered to Cork university Maternity Hospital staff and to midwifery post-graduate students in University College Cork.
- The HSE Dublin Mid Leinster (DML) notes that smoking cessation programmes are delivered in the following locations:
 - Midland Regional General Hospital, Mullingar – Linking with the ante-natal Clinical Nurse Manager for referrals to decrease the uptake of smoking in pregnancy. Clinic held on a weekly basis. Portarlinton Primary Community Continuing Care – Clinic held weekly. Longford Health Promoting Service/Athlone PCCC – Clinic/Patients seen as required.
 - Brief Intervention Training carried out to health care professionals to enable them to deliver smoking cessation within there area for example post natal mothers, GP Practices etc.
 - Training and support for Facilitators nationally in Quit4Youth Cessation Programme.
 - Weekly Smoking Cessation Clinics (Celbridge Health Centre, Mary Mercer Health Centre, Curlew Road Health Centre, Dublin South Inner City Clinic, Cherry Orchard Clinic, Portarlinton Primary Care Clinic, Midland Regional Hospital, Tullamore and Portlaoise Clinics).
 - Smoking Cessation Inputs to Traveller Health Women’s Groups in Tallaght, Clondalkin, Kildare, Birr and Tullamore.
 - Training in Brief Interventions for Smoking Cessation delivered to Hospital and Community Midwives in Coombe Women and Infants University Hospital.
 - Smoking Cessation Inputs to Girls Schools in Terenure and Walkinstown.
- The HSE Dublin North East region has a comprehensive smoking cessation service, based in both hospital and community settings which support approximately 4,000 people annually to stop smoking. In disadvantaged communities, there are key services available which are primarily used by women (75%).

Objective 9
To increase the number of women participating in Sport and Physical Activity in Ireland

CONTEXT

22. This objective envisages a holistic approach to women’s health by encouraging more involvement in sport and in mass participation events in order to improve women’s overall well being.

ACTIONS 2010

23. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2010:

23.1 HSE and/or Irish Sports Council Promotion of Physical Activity

- The HSE provide an information/resources service on nutrition & physical activity to schools, workplaces, community organisations, health centres, GPs and Pharmacies via Health Promotion Departments and HSE Distribution Service.
- In 2009, the HSE led an expert working group in developing National Physical Activity Guidelines for Ireland “Get Ireland Active”. These guidelines provide clear, concise and user-friendly guidance to support the public, professionals and policy makers in promoting physical activity across the population. A number of fact sheets and a dedicated website with links to other relevant organisations are available on: www.getirelandactive.ie.
- The National Physical Activity Guidelines for Ireland encourage all adults and older people to engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity (or as much as ability allows) five days a week with a focus on an aerobic activity, muscle strengthening and balance.
- The HSE support the Irish Sports Council in their Women in Sport Programmes throughout the country. An example of some of these programmes include: Swim Development Programme, Women Active, marathon Split, Community Games Minority Sports, Hip Hop Dance, Traveller Women, Meet & Train, Girls Active, Wisemove, Mentoring through Sport, Basketball, Kilkenny Women Activity Programme, Tipp Women on the Move, Skill for Life, Get active 55+.
- The Irish Sports Councils/LSPs “Get Active 55 programme” targets men and women aged 55 years + to become more physically active.
- The HSE in partnership with Age and Opportunity, the Irish Sports Council (ISC) and the Local Sports Partnerships promote the ‘Go for Life’ national programme for sports and physical activity for older adults in the active retired sector. The programme specifically targets the promotion of physical activities through training Physical Activity Leaders and the national grants scheme for physical activity. Other programmes that are offered at a more local level include:
 - Falls prevention programmes
 - Chair aerobics
 - Bowls
 - Tai Chi
 - Walking groups for older adults
 - Silver Surfers (older adult swim group).
- The GP Exercise referral programme refers patients with low risk medical conditions to specially designated exercise professionals in seeking to prevent chronic illness and the onset of medical conditions. There is an unintended gender bias in this service as more women than men are likely to access GP services.
- The Irish Heart Foundation, supported by the HSE has developed a national network of Sli Na Slainte walking routes in both urban & rural settings.
- Exercise forms part of programmes in the HSE South Being Well Lifestyle course. Training programmes offered to community and health professionals in promoting Physical Activity.
- In 2010, the HSE Dublin Mid Leinster (DML) provided life skills training on increasing physical activity levels to women in HSE Workplace and Community Groups.

23.2 Irish Sports Council

- Further to the publication in 2009 of a research report on mass participation events such as the Women’s Mini-Marathon, a further report “*Do mass participation events have a role in making*

populations more active?” was published in 2010. This report contains factsheets and practical information for event organisers.

- Women taking up volunteering and coaching roles in National Governing Bodies (NGBs) continue to be mainstreamed. A significant number of women are now employed by NGBs in roles up to CEO level.
- Many NGBs have prioritised women’s participation in coach education and there has been a significant uptake in courses by women. Women are featuring more as coaches throughout the majority of sports.
- In 2010, targeted funding to NGBs for special initiatives to attract/retain women’s involvement in sport was just over €1.9 million. This was broken down into €1,374,900 for NGBs, €400,000 for the FAI and IRFU and €140,788 for the Local Sports Partnerships (LSPs).
- Local female specific events continue to roll out through the LSP network for example Mini-Marathons and walking events. LSP’s continue to play a key role in supporting “Meet and Train” groups for a range of activities such as jogging, walking and cycling at local level.
- The Irish Sports Council (ISC) promotes all participation events for women run by NGBs or LSPs on its website and the NGBs themselves promote women through their communication channels.
- The Children’s Sport Participation & Physical Activity Study was published in 2010 and showed that 83% of primary school children are involved in extra school sport (up 2% on 2004) while 64% of post primary school students are involved in extra school sport (down 6%). The Irish Sports Monitor for 2009 has not yet been published so we do not have current information for adult participation.
- The LSP network continues to provide information on a broad range of participation opportunities to their local communities.
- Due to economic constraints in 2010 it was not possible to expand the Women in Sport grant scheme.
- Awareness of the “Women in Sport” brand has been significant with usage of the WIS logo among NGBs who have branded initiatives with it and it is prominent on many websites alongside their programmes. A Women in Sport calendar for 2010 was also produced.
- The Women in Sport website is maintained and updated regularly with content provided by the public and NGBs.

Objective 10

To ensure the health and safety of pregnant and breast feeding women at work

ACTIONS 2010

24. The following actions have taken place during 2010:

24.1 European Union

- A proposal by the European Commission for a Directive to amend Directive 92/85/EEC on the introduction of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding was forwarded to the European Parliament in 2009. Additional material on this proposal can be found under Objective 7

24.2 HSE

- A New National Breastfeeding Co-ordinator has been appointed and will advocate for development of workplace breastfeeding policy.
- A campaign was launched in 2009 by the HSE Breastfeeding Strategy Implementation Committee (BSIC) to increase breastfeeding rates in Ireland by two per cent a year. The five year Strategic Action Plan for Breastfeeding, which was published in 2005, includes better hospital and community breastfeeding services for mothers.
- The HSE rolled out a campaign in 2010 pertaining to Breastfeeding to mark National Breastfeeding Week from 1-7 October 2010. The HSE has a range of support materials available, including a 'Feeding Your Baby' leaflet, a 'Breastfeeding and work' booklet and a Breastfeeding Support Network Card. All materials can be obtained in maternity hospitals, health centres, GP surgeries, pharmacies and HSE health promotion departments. Information is also available on the HSE website www.breastfeeding.ie.

Objective 11

To protect women from bullying and harassment in the workplace

CONTEXT

25. Much had been written in recent years about the problem of workplace bullying which can be perpetrated against workers of both sexes, but where women are more frequently the victims. The Health and Safety Authority (HSA) published the '*Code of Practice for Employers and Employees on the Prevention and Resolution of Bullying at Work*' in 2007.
26. The Equality Authority's Annual Report for 2009, which was published in July 2010, states that the Authority received 92 bullying queries and 138 harassment queries under the Employment Equality Acts during 2009 and in the same period received 17 harassment queries under the Equal Status Act. The Annual Reports of the Equality Tribunal also show that a number of cases of bullying and harassment are referred to and determined by the Equality Tribunal every year.

ACTIONS 2010

27. The following actions were reported for 2010.
- 27.1 **Health and Safety Authority**
- The Health and Safety Authority's Annual Report for 2009, which was published in June 2010, states that inspections of anti-bullying policies were undertaken during 2009 in 983 companies with more than 50 employees. Employers were found to have written records relating to bullying complaints in 63% of the workplaces inspected. Employers were found to meet requirements in relation to other key aspects of the Code of Practice in approximately 70% of cases.
- 27.2 **Equality Authority**
- The Equality Authority is working on a revised Code of Practice for the prevention of harassment in the workplace to be published in 2011.

Objective 12

To combat violence against women through improved services for victims together with effective prevention and prosecution

CONTEXT

28. The Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform announced the establishment of Cosc, the new executive office to address violence against women and other forms of sexual and domestic violence, at the launch of the National Women's Strategy in April 2007.

ACTIONS 2010

29. The following actions have been reported by Cosc on behalf of the sector and on its own behalf during 2010:

29.1 *National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence, 2010-2014:*

- In 2010, Cosc, the National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence, completed its priority work on the development of a National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence for the five-year period from 2010 to 2014. In March 2010 the national strategy was approved by the Government and published.
- At the core of the approach to the strategy is action based on primary and secondary interventions. Primary intervention relates to the prevention of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence through generating greater understanding, increasing recognition and raising awareness. Secondary intervention deals with responding to the violence concerned by ensuring better provision of services to and protection for victims, improving co-ordination and dealing with the offending behaviour of perpetrators. The overall aim of the strategy is the development of a strong framework for sustainable intervention to prevent and effectively respond to domestic, sexual and gender-based violence.
- During 2010, a Strategy Oversight Committee monitored implementation of the strategy and assisted in identifying solutions to any high level difficulties or delays. The committee is chaired by the Secretary General of the Department of Justice and Law Reform and it met twice during the year. Reports were submitted to the Strategy Oversight Committee in June 2010 and in December 2010. In addition, progress on the implementation of the strategy was encouraged and monitored by Cosc on an ongoing basis. Overall, good progress was made on the implementation of the strategy.

29.2 *Awareness-raising and funding:*

- Good progress was made on the implementation of the 2010 Information Programme. There were a range of activities in the media. Several articles on the National Strategy were published in journals and Radio and TV interviews took place. Presentations on the National Strategy and domestic and sexual violence were given at seminars and conferences nationally. The “Your silence feeds the violence” poster campaign continued.
- Cosc awarded over €286,000 in funding to 53 groups under the 2010 scheme which provides grant funding to local and national groups to raise awareness of domestic, sexual and gender-based violence and the services that are available to victims.
- The Commission for the Support of Victims of Crime made a grant of €10,000 to the Women's Therapy Centre for 2010. This centre is a privately operated centre which primarily deals with referrals from women's support services.
- Observations were received on the final draft of the report of Cosc's survey of awareness raising programmes in post-primary schools. The report is nearing finalisation.

29.3 *School programmes:*

- The Department of Education and Skills has commissioned the development of content and resources on domestic and sexual violence for inclusion in the RSE programmes. A Working Group is being established to oversee the initiative. This will develop a programme initially for second level schools, and will then adapt it for suitability within the Youthreach programme for early school leavers. The content will reinforce and connect the key messages of relevance in the existing SPHE and RSE programmes, provide background information on trends and risk factors in domestic and sexual violence, and information on where help is available.
- The Union of Students of Ireland agreed to pilot a campaign in four colleges in early 2011 to increase understanding and provide practical information on domestic, sexual and gender-based violence to third level students. Following evaluation and review the campaign will be rolled out to other colleges.

29.4 *Publications and Committees:*

- The *Victims Charter and Guide to the Criminal Justice System* was published by the Minister for Justice and Law Reform in July 2010. It contains definitive commitments to the victim of crime on behalf of one voluntary sector organisation (the Crime Victims Helpline) and eight criminal justice agencies (An Garda Síochána, the Courts Service, the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (DPP), The Probation Service, The Prison Service, the Legal Aid Board, the Coroner Service and the Criminal Injuries Compensation Tribunal).
- Progress was made on finalising Cosc's report on domestic and sexual violence service provision and co-ordination in Ireland.
- A committee representing support services and state agencies was established by Cosc. The discussion paper to examine a one-stop-shop option for greater accessibility to services for victims of domestic and sexual violence was developed and updated. Cosc continued efforts during 2010 to identify a one-stop-shop site for an investigative visit by representatives of the committee.
- The Attrition Committee met on three occasions to consider research on the issue of attrition. Discussion papers were developed and discussed. Attrition at initial reporting stage, investigation stage and court process stage has been considered and proposals are nearing finalisation.
- Work on finalising a report on the improvement of data collection on domestic and sexual violence was completed and circulated for the information of the Cosc-led Data Committee. The inaugural meeting of the Data Committee took place in November, 2010. A priority of the committee is the development of a data plan. The Office of the Data Protection Commissioner has indicated its availability to provide input to any initiative or guidance brought forward to promote inter-agency co-ordination through multi-agency projects in this area and will highlight best practice where that is relevant. A meeting with the ODPC is planned for 2011.

29.5 *Perpetrator Programmes:*

- During 2010, Cosc continued to monitor progress of, and contribute to, the work of a working group on the integrated management of high risk offenders. Several meetings of the Perpetrator Programmes Committee took place during the year. The committee advises Cosc on the development and implementation of policy and practice in relation to domestic violence perpetrator intervention programmes.
- A particular focus of Cosc was reviewing data collection practices by a selection of domestic violence perpetrator programmes. This will facilitate the examination of the efficiency and, to a limited extent, the effectiveness of these programmes. A programme reporting template was designed by Cosc and issued to Perpetrator Programmes for completion. A draft Perpetrator Programmes Plan was prepared and circulated to Perpetrator Programmes for observations. The plan was finalised by the end of the year.
- Cosc continued to monitor progress on the implementation of the new prison treatment programme for convicted sexual violence perpetrators.

29.6 *Amendments to Legislation*

- **General amendments to the Domestic Violence Act 1996**
The Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill published in August 2010 provided for amendments to the Domestic Violence Act 1996. An amendment to the Act proposes to allow a person to apply for a safety order against a person with whom he or she had a child in common even if the couple concerned never lived together. Technical amendments were also included to ensure that opposite-sex and same-sex cohabiting couples have equal access to safety orders or barring orders. Residency requirements for an applicant for a Safety Order were to be removed. Second stage of the Bill commenced in November 2010 but had not continued by the end of the year.

- **Amendment of s.10 of the Domestic Violence Act 1996 to provide for a presumption of service by post for orders made under the Act**

A proposal was made by Cosc with a view to the change being made as a Committee Stage amendment to the Civil Law (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill.

- **Amendments to s.17 of the Domestic Violence Act 1996 to provide for the anonymity of parties to proceedings for breaches of orders made under the Act**

Proposed amendments by Cosc are included in a Criminal Justice (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill which was with the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel in the Attorney General's Office at end 2010.

29.7 **Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government**

- Action 10 of the National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence 2010-2014 relates to policy guidance for housing authorities to assist effectiveness and consistency in the development of housing responses for victims of domestic violence. A small working group has been established by DEHLG with representatives from DEHLG, Cosc, HSE, HSCA and the Local Authority Managers Association to examine housing responses to domestic violence.

Objective 13

To address the issue of trafficking of women and children

CONTEXT

30. In recent years, evidence of the practice of human trafficking began to emerge in Ireland. International intelligence led to the multi-lateral organisations highlighting the international character of this problem.

ACTIONS 2009

31. The following actions have been reported by the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) of the Department of Justice and Law Reform during 2010:

31.1 ***Support services for victims of human trafficking:***

- Four dedicated units dealing with human trafficking have been established in Department of Justice and Law Reform, the Garda National Immigration Bureau, the Legal Aid Board and in the HSE.
- The following services are available to all potential and suspected victims of human trafficking.
 - Accommodation (Reception and Integration Agency(RIA));
 - Health Care and care planning (HSE);
 - Legal Services (Legal Aid Board (LAB));
 - Education for minors (Dept of Education and Skills);
 - Assistance in transferring to mainstream services where appropriate (Asylum Seekers and New Communities Unit, HSE (ASNCU))
 - Vocational training and employment programmes where appropriate (FAS);
 - Crime Prevention Officers and Witness Protection where appropriate (An Garda Síochána);
 - Assisted Voluntary Return where appropriate (INIS, RIA);
 - Compensation Mechanisms
 - Interpretation services, when appropriate;
 - Information (AHTU/LAB/ASNCU).

31.2 ***Awareness raising and training***

- The Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland jointly re-launched the 'Blue Blindfold' awareness raising campaign for the general public on 18 January, 2011 to reinforce its central message – 'Don't close your eyes to human trafficking'.

- Three 'Train the Trainer' courses by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) have been completed with 40 participants from 13 different organisations. Since the completion of this training a total of 180 persons in four of the organisations who completed the training have received training on human trafficking given by those who attended the 'Train the Trainers' course.
- Advertisements and information articles have been placed in a wide range of publications aimed at those working in both state and private sector organisations (e.g. VOX magazine, Public Sector Times, Forum Healthcare magazine, The Irish journalist magazine, The Phoenix magazine, Airlines International magazine, GAA match programmes).
- On 18 October 2010, to mark EU Anti-Trafficking Day, the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit (AHTU) organised a one day Film Festival to increase awareness of Human Trafficking.
- Leaflets and Bookmarks which provide information on human trafficking have been printed and widely distributed (e.g. in public libraries throughout the country).

31.3 *An Garda Síochána:*

- Over 495 operational Garda personnel have received detailed training to enable them identify and refer victims of human trafficking for support and deal with prosecutions, if appropriate. A further 2,956 personnel have received awareness raising training as part of the final phase of their training.
- 139 people have participated in basic awareness training which has been provided by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) with input from NGOs, the Garda National Immigration Bureau and the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit. Course participants included representatives of the National Employment Rights Authority, the Private Security Authority, the Department of Enterprise Trade and Innovation, the Irish Naturalisation and Immigration Service, the Health Service Executive, the Department of Social Protection, the Office of the Refugee Applications Commissioner, the Anti Human Trafficking Unit, the Victims' Support Helpline and the Victims of Crime Office.
- The Criminal Assets Bureau support anti-human trafficking investigations conducted by GNIB and other Garda Divisions by seeking to attach the proceeds of the crimes of human traffickers.
- The National Referral Mechanism has been put in place for the identification of victims of trafficking which includes information and referrals from NGOs and others to An Garda Síochána.

31.4 *EU/International*

- The Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) Act 2008 gives effect to the 2002 EU Framework Decision. Legislation will be reviewed and amended as necessary after the EU **Directive on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and protecting victims** has been agreed by the EU Council of Ministers in March 2011.

31.5 *FÁS Support to the Ruhama Special Initiative:*

- In 2010, FÁS provided funding to the Dublin Employment Pact to support the Dignity Ruhama Pre-Training Project for Victims of Sex Trafficking. (Ruhama is a voluntary organisation, established in 1989 to provide support services to women affected by prostitution and other forms of commercial sexual exploitation. Based on individual need Ruhama offers support, assistance and opportunities to explore alternatives to prostitution, it also offers recovery from exploitation through sex trafficking. Ruhama also works to change public attitudes, practices and policies which allow the exploitation of women through trafficking and prostitution.)
- The aim of this project was to support victims of trafficking and women exiting prostitution to progress with supports to enter mainstream training and education programmes. The aim of the pre-training support programme (supported by FÁS) was to engage with thirty women during a twelve month period and provide links to local FÁS and Local Employment Services. An

integrated and holistic centred approach was provided which included health services, safety planning, accommodation, advocacy services, legal services and money management. The evaluation carried out on the programme concluded that it was a very successful pilot.

CHAPTER 5

THEME THREE - ENGAGING WOMEN AS EQUAL AND ACTIVE CITIZENS

INTRODUCTION

1. The advancement of women into decision making roles has been a key objective of European and multi-lateral social policy for many years. The Council of Europe recommends that the membership of national parliaments include representation of at least 40 per cent of persons of each sex. Similar targets have been set by the European Union.

Objective 14
To increase the number of women in decision-making positions in Ireland

CONTEXT

2. The involvement of women in decision making positions may bring them into politics or into senior positions in professional life. There is evidence from recent research in Scandinavian countries and in France that female participation in the boards of major publicly quoted companies has correlated directly with the success of those companies, in terms of stock market performance and profits. A number of European countries now have significant female presence in national politics and at Ministerial level.
3. Table 19 below shows statistics gathered by the European Commission in relation to women's participation in national politics across all Member States. The three top ranked countries and the three bottom ranked countries are shown, as is the EU average and the statistics for Ireland.

TABLE 17
WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL POLITICS – EU - 2005 AND 2010

Per cent of women in single/lower House of National Parliament			Percentage of Women serving as Senior Ministers		
	2005	2010		2005	2010
Top Three			Top Three		
Sweden	49	46	Finland	47	55
Netherlands	39	41	Spain	47	50
Finland/Belgium	38/35	40	Denmark	28	47
EU – 27	23	24	EU – 27	22	27
IRELAND (23rd)	13	14	IRELAND (17th)	21	20
Bottom Three			Bottom Three		
Cyprus	16	13	Romania	17	12
Romania	11	11	Estonia	15	8
Malta/Hungary	9	9	Hungary/Czech Republic	12/18	0

Source: European Commission Database on Women and Men in Decision-Making. Data collected between 21/09/2010 – 30/09/2010

4. The first part of the table refers to women's participation in national parliaments. These statistics refer to the Dáil only in Ireland's case; women's representation in Seanad Éireann is slightly higher. With a female participation rate of only 14 per cent in 2010, Ireland ranks 23rd of the 27 Member States in terms of women's participation in the national parliament. This is well below the EU average of 24 per cent. It is worth noting that the top four countries listed are the only EU Member States where female representation in national parliament exceeds the target of 40 per cent while representation exceeds 30 per cent in a further four Member States.
5. The second part of the table looks at female representation among senior Ministers. Here Ireland performs better, ranked at 17th of the 27 Member States. The EU average was 27 per cent and five Member States exceeded 40 per cent, with a further three exceeding 30 per cent of women in senior Ministerial roles.
6. Table 20 below reviews women's participation as leaders in business. Drawn from the European Commission's Annual Report on Equality between Women and Men 2010 and the Commission's

Database on Women and Men in Decision-Making, the table shows that there are relatively few women in the senior ranks of Irish business at present.

TABLE 18
WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION AS LEADERS IN BUSINESS - EU

Percentage of Leaders of Business who were Women 2008*		Percentage of Members of Decision-making Body of Largest Publicly Quoted Companies who were Women 2010**	
	%		%
Top Three		Top Three	
France	40.0	Sweden/Finland	26
Latvia	35.3	Latvia	23
Spain	35.1	Slovakia	22
EU – 27	32.5	EU – 27	12
IRELAND (25th)	19.2	IRELAND (20th)	8
Bottom Three		Bottom Three	
Ireland	19.2	Italy/Portugal	5
Malta	16.0	Cyprus/Luxembourg	4
Cyprus	8.2	Malta	2

*Source: European Commission's Annual Report on Equality between Women and Men 2010

**Source: European Commission Database on Women and Men in Decision-Making. Data collected between 27/09/2010 – 09/10/2010

Notes: Leaders of Business – Directors and Chief Executives and Managers of Small Enterprises

7. The table looks at two indicators. The first relates to the involvement of women as leaders in businesses, including the roles of directors and chief executives and as managers of SMEs. Under this indicator, Ireland ranks in the bottom three, 25th among Member States, at just over 19 per cent. The EU average is 32.5 per cent.
8. The second indicator in Table 20 looks at women's participation at board level in blue chip, publicly quoted companies. Here, Ireland ranks slightly higher than the previous indicator but, at 8 per cent, is only placed 20th of the 27 Member States and is below the EU average of 12 per cent. The Scandinavian Member States are to the fore in this indicator and the decision of the Norwegian Government to impose a quota of 40 per cent for board membership of its publicly quoted companies has created interest throughout Europe.
9. The Irish Government has committed since 2002 to increase female representation on State Boards so that women occupy at least 40 per cent of these places. Nevertheless, while there has been some increase in female representation in recent years, progress towards the target has been slow.

ACTIONS 2010

10. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2010:
 - 10.1 *Oireachtas*
 - The publication in 2009 of the Report of the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Justice, Equality, Defence and Women's Rights' Sub-Committee on '*Women's Participation in Politics*' identified the five 'Cs' as the main obstacles to women's participation in Irish politics:
 - Childcare;
 - Cash;
 - Confidence;
 - Culture; and
 - Candidate Selection Procedures
 - In July 2010, the Oireachtas Joint Committee on the Constitution published its Fourth Report on Article 16 of the Constitution '*Review of the Electoral System for the Election of Members to Dáil Éireann*'. The Report makes a number of recommendations for increasing the representation of women in Irish politics, including:
 - That political parties pursue positive measures to promote gender equality in its membership, including in the selection of candidates for election; and

- That political parties be required, as one of the conditions for public funding, to submit an annual statement to the new Electoral Commission, for publication, setting out in detail the policies and actions being pursued by them to promote gender equality in their electoral candidates and parliamentary representation.
- Excerpts from the full report of the Committee on the Constitution relating to women's representation in Irish politics, including the transcripts of the presentations made to the Committee and the Committee's recommendations can be found at Appendix III.

10.2 ***Gender Equality Division: NWS Sub-Committee on Women in Decision-Making***

- At its meeting in May 2010, the NWS Monitoring Committee approved the Terms of Reference for the establishment of a 'Sub-Committee on Women in Decision-Making'.
- The aim of Sub-Committee is to advance Objective 14 of the National Women's Strategy by considering and setting in train a range of measurable and targeted actions to advance the position of women in key decision-making positions in Ireland. This objective and the work of the Sub-Committee link with international recommendations that women should fill at least 40 per cent of places in decision-making roles at all levels to ensure a balanced democracy.
- The Sub-Committee will examine the issues surrounding the low participation of women in Ireland in decision-making roles and will propose recommendations, where appropriate, for improving the current situation in the following areas:
 - Women in management positions in employment (both Public and Private sector employment and in the trade unions);
 - Women on Boards (both Corporate and State Boards);
 - Women in Politics;
 - Women in the Diplomatic Service; and
 - Women in the Judiciary.
- Membership of the Sub-Committee on Women in Decision-Making is drawn from the Monitoring Committee, with IBEC, Congress, the National Women's Council of Ireland, the Equality Authority and key Government Departments all represented.
- The inaugural meeting of the Sub-Committee was held in December 2010. The meeting was Chaired by the then Minister of State with responsibility for Equality, Integration and Human Rights, Ms. Mary White, T.D.. At this meeting the members agreed a Work Programme for the Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee will meet approximately every three to four weeks during 2011, aiming to complete the work as soon as possible and will present an update to the Monitoring Committee at its meeting in Summer 2011.

10.3 ***Gender Equality Division: Women on State Boards***

- Since the 1990s, the Government has monitored the percentage of women appointed to State Boards with a view to achieving a minimum representation of 40 per cent for women.
- At the end of 2009, there were 3,299 persons serving on 269 State Boards. Of these Board Members, 1,120 were women, giving a female representation rate of just under 34 per cent (compared with the target of 40 per cent). Female representation for 2009 represents no change on the 2008 figures.
- The total number of female chairpersons of State Boards in 2009 was 46, representing 17.83 per cent of the overall figure. On a more positive note, a total of 14 out of 44 newly appointed chairpersons were women in 2009, representing almost 32%.
- Where Ministers were responsible for the nomination to the Boards, the female representation rate for 2009 was 39 per cent, compared with 33.7 per cent in 2008. Of the nominations made by external nominating bodies, 35 per cent were women, compared with 31 per cent the previous year.

- Women represented just under 38 per cent of all appointments made to State Boards during 2009, an increase of almost 5 per cent on the previous year.
- In November 2010, Government reaffirmed its commitment to increase female participation in decision-making towards the internationally recognised target of 40 per cent and agreed to ask Ministers and Departments to make a concerted effort on positive action and to work to achieve the target of 40 per cent for women's participation on State Boards.

10.4 *Department of Finance: Women in the Civil Service*

- The Department of Finance notes that the delivery of the Civil and Public Sector actions in the National Women's Strategy is being considered in light of the economic downturn, the consequent moratorium on recruitment and promotion in the public service and the redeployment of staff within the public sector in particular.
- The percentage of female Assistant Principals (AP) at December 2010 was 38.6 per cent, compared with the target of 33.3 per cent. This further improvement on the 2009 figure may be related to the significant number of officials who took the early retirement option and also the non replacement of staff that retired on normal age grounds. These were more usually male officials.
- The percentage of female Principal Officers at December 2010 was 30.6 per cent, compared with the target of 27 per cent. The comments in relation to APs above also apply here.

Objective 15

To increase the number of women involved in the arts in Ireland

CONTEXT

11. This objective relates to the engagement of women in decision making positions in the Arts, promotion of awareness of equality in the Arts and the involvement of women as audiences for the Arts.

ACTIONS 2010

12. No new material has been made available.

Objective 16

To use media proactively to support gender equality and the advancement of women.

CONTEXT

13. The persistence of gender stereotypes is widely considered to have a detrimental effect on the achievement of de facto gender equality. This was a focus of the Slovenian EU Presidency in 2008 and was reviewed again at the Ministerial Conference 'New ways to Overcome Gender Stereotypes' under the Czech Presidency in Prague in May 2009.
14. Much work has been done in the Department of Education and Science to overcome stereotypes in the Irish education system. However, in the wider society, much needs to be done in this area. This objective aims to address the role which the media can play in relation to the advancement of the role of women through the portrayal of positive role models and the avoidance of excessive stereotypical roles.
15. As a societal issue, responsibility for overcoming stereotypes does not rest exclusively with any single Department or Agency but is an issue which should be highlighted regularly to prompt debate and awareness of the negative impact of stereotypes.
16. The appropriate portrayal of various groups, including women, and the avoidance of discrimination against such groups in the broadcast media is covered in the Broadcasting Commission of Ireland's "Code of Programme Standards" and the "General Advertising Code".

17. This issue is also covered voluntarily by the advertising sector through the Advertising Standards Authority of Ireland (ASAI). Its updated “Manual of Advertising Self-Regulation with the Code of Standards for Advertising, Promotional and Direct Marketing in Ireland” came into force in 2007. Specifically, the Code includes, inter alia, the following provisions:

Marketing communications should respect the dignity of all persons and should avoid causing offence on grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the traveller community.

Marketing communications should respect the principle of the equality of men and women. They should avoid sex stereotyping and any exploitation or demeaning of men and women. Where appropriate, marketing communications should use generic terms that include both the masculine and feminine gender; for example, the term 'business executive' covers both men and women.

18. In addition the ASAI also includes a code of practice in relation to the marketing of health and beauty products and slimming products which are likely to positively impact on women as consumers.

ACTIONS 2010

19. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2010:

20. **Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources**

Insofar as broadcasting and public service broadcasting is a subset of “*media*”, the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources has made inquiries with RTÉ which has responded along the following lines:

- During the 1980s and 1990s, RTÉ recognised that there was a need to address the advancement of women in, and on, RTÉ. This was addressed by putting in place recruitment programmes and training. In addition work was undertaken to ensure that the representation of women on screen and on microphone was based on best practice in regard to gender balance.
- RTÉ believes that today full adherence to all equality legislation is what is required and that it is no longer necessary to have in place any specific measures in regard to either the participation of women in the media workforce or the representation of women on the media. For example about five years ago RTÉ compiled a directory of potential women contributors to programmes. RTÉ found that researchers, producers and reporters did not use this directory as they felt their contact books already had a gender balance. Incidentally women make up over half of all production staff in RTÉ.
- RTÉ does not propose any measures specifically designed to deal with the issues of gender equality. RTÉ’s recruitment over the last two decades and their career development programmes have ensured that women are not discriminated against in the workforce or in their portrayal in media under RTÉ’s control.

These fundamental principles are reflected in RTÉ’s ethos and in all corporate publications. For example, in the June 2004 **Public Service Broadcasting Charter** the following statement is included in relation to the Station's Public Service Remit:

“no editorial or programming bias shall be shown in terms of gender, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, religion or membership of a minority community.”

Gender: *“in its programming and editorial content, RTÉ shall strive to resist gender stereotyping”.*

This is also reflected in RTÉ’s corporate documentation, such as the **Guiding Principles** publications and in the following from RTÉ **Programme Standards and Guidelines** (last revised November 2007):

“Programme-makers should familiarise themselves with relevant legislation on this area such as the Employment Equality Act 1998 and the Disability Act 2005 (both accessible at www.irishstatutebook.ie) The nine stated grounds whereby discrimination is illegal are gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community”.

Other sections of this document, such as 'Care in the Use of Language' emphasise the importance of using gender-inclusive terms at all times, while the entry under 'Respect for Diversity' emphasises a work environment free of discrimination on any such grounds.

- Therefore gender equality is already, and has been for many years, part of RTÉ policy at all levels across the organisation, both in its internal working environment as well as in its representation of women on any RTÉ media services. RTÉ is fully cognisant of its responsibilities in this regard, and is subject to constant scrutiny and monitoring through various regulatory channels as well as through internal oversight and editorial controls.
- RTÉ advise that the first female Managing Director of Radio was appointed in February 2009.
- An exercise was carried out in the News Division of RTE (prompted by a FOI request) which showed that, when years of service are taken into account, the pay of male and female staff is comparable.

<p>Objective 17 - A To foster the achievement of the UN Millennium Development Goals through Irish Aid.</p>

CONTEXT

21. The following objectives relate to gender issues within the multi-lateral sector and in Ireland's overseas aid programme, implemented by Irish Aid and other Sections within the Department of Foreign Affairs including the Conflict Resolution Unit and the Human Rights Unit.
22. Ireland's overseas aid programme was reviewed by the OECD in early 2009 and the following positive comment was made in relation to gender mainstreaming within Irish Aid:

“Irish Aid's approach to the mainstreaming of its priority issues – namely gender, environment, HIV/AIDS and governance – is a strong, though evolving, feature of its aid programme which already provides lessons that could be shared with other donors. Irish Aid is encouraged to improve reporting on mainstreaming and focus on measuring development impacts to enhance its own learning as well as that of other donors.”

ACTIONS 2010

23. The following actions have been reported by Department of Foreign Affairs and Irish Aid during 2010:
 - The Development Co-operation Directorate within the Department of Foreign Affairs (Irish Aid) continued to mainstream gender equality across all programming in 2010. A particular priority in 2010 was strengthening gender mainstreaming in the approach to results based management.
 - Support is provided to civil society organisations, multi-lateral and partner governments working on gender equality. Precise figures are not yet available for 2010 but in 2009, €5.5 million was spent in supporting civil society and other government and multi-lateral organisations working on gender equality.
 - There are a number of examples of how the Irish Aid programme has supported women's economic empowerment including; support provided to the ILO programme on “Women's

Entrepreneurship and Development” and support to CSOs in a number of countries providing micro-credit to women e.g. in Ethiopia and Timor Leste.

- Supporting women’s health needs is a policy priority for Irish Aid. Support is provided to the Royal Colleges of Surgeons in Ireland and East Africa (2008-2011) to improve access to quality of surgical including obstetric care.
- In 2009, €4.4 million was allocated to programmes responding to or working to prevent Gender-Based Violence (GBV), these include national and international civil society organisations, multilaterals and partner governments in Irish Aid programme countries.
- In a number of programme countries, Irish Aid has supported gender sensitive legislative reform including supporting the mainstreaming of gender in the land policy of the Ugandan government. Support is also provided to Civil Society Organisations working to build awareness of women’s rights, e.g. in Ethiopia support is provided to an NGO Farm Africa which provides information to women regarding their legal rights.
- Irish Aid supports the Education for all Fast Track Initiative (€3.8 million in 2010) promoting gender equality in access to and retention is a key priority of the FTI. Irish Aid supports government education strategies in Mozambique, Zambia, Lesotho and Uganda which prioritise girls’ access to and retention in education.
- A new HIV/AIDS Policy and Strategy is almost finalised, where Gender Inequality and the subordination of women is emphasised as a key driver of the pandemic that needs to be addressed.
- The close link between gender inequality and HIV is reflected in programming and budgeting at all levels. A programme with GAIN to provide nutritional support to pregnant and lactating women with HIV was commenced in Mozambique at the end of 2010.
- Ireland is a strong supporter of the International Partnership for Microbicides, who’s CEO gave the key address at the Irish Aid World AIDS Day event. Support of €1 million is provided annually to the venture.

Objective 17 - B

To use multi-lateral aid and development policy to promote the role of women and gender equality in developing countries.

ACTIONS 2010

24. The following actions have been reported by Department of Foreign Affairs and Irish Aid during 2010:
- In discussions on the future of European development policy, Ireland has emphasised the role of women farmers in relation to agriculture, food security and nutrition.
 - In 2010, Dáil Éireann approved interim EU Economic Partnership Agreements with the East African Community (EAC); and Eastern and Southern Africa States (ESA). Both of these included provisions on the promotion of gender equality in fisheries by developing the capacity of women engaged in fisheries. The Productive Sectors section of the Development Matrix annexed to the ESA interim EPA highlighted gender as an area for cooperation, specifically the promotion of female entrepreneurship through targeted interventions.
 - Ireland engaged intensively in the preparations for the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) Summit, at national, EU and international level. We worked closely with other Member States to ensure a central emphasis on the global hunger crisis, which disproportionately affects women and children. On the margins of the Summit, Ireland organised a major international meeting, co-hosted by Minister Micheal Martin and US Secretary of State, Hilary Clinton, to launch a

new partnership between governments, civil society and the private sector to address under-nutrition.

- Irish Aid programmes support national gender machineries and donor co-ordination mechanisms in a number of countries which are working to mainstream gender equality across government more effectively, e.g. in Timor Leste and Tanzania. In Uganda, Irish Aid provides support to the Gender & Equity budgeting initiative of the Ministry of Finance.

Objective 17 – C
To enhance the capacity of Irish Aid and Development Partners to respond effectively to Gender Based Violence in conflict, post-conflict and developing environments.

CONTEXT

25. Gender based violence was discussed at length at the 2008 meeting of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. France, in its capacity as President of the European Union in Semester 2/2008 also undertook a study on the EU indicators on “Women and Armed Conflict”, leading to “Agreed Conclusions” on the matter at the December 2009 ESPHCA Council. The Council of Europe also completed a recommendation to its Council of Ministers on this topic in mid 2010.

ACTIONS 2010

26. The following actions have been reported by Department of Foreign Affairs and Irish Aid during 2010:
- Ireland is a member of the European Council Working Group on Human Rights (COHOM) Task Force on Violence against Women, which has been working on the implementation of the EU Guidelines on Violence Against Women (VAW).
 - Input to the development of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence was also provided.
 - Irish Aid within DFA continues to be an active member of the Joint Consortium on GBV and to provide financial support.
 - The issue of the inclusion of gender-related measures in the mandates of peacekeeping operations; provision of resources for gender advisers / units in peacekeeping operations; and awareness and enforcement of codes of conduct for peacekeepers has been highlighted as an objective in Ireland’s draft National Action Plan (NAP) on UNSCR 1325. It is intended that the Action Plan, currently still undergoing revision, will be finalised in 2011. Progress on this issue will then be measured through the ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation framework of the NAP.
 - The issue of ensuring that women are involved at every stage of peace negotiations in planning, decision-making and implementation at all levels has been highlighted as an objective in Ireland’s draft National Action Plan (NAP) on UNSCR 1325. It is intended that the Action Plan, currently still undergoing revision, will be finalised in 2011. Progress on this issue will then be measured through the ongoing M&E framework of the NAP.
 - The issue of pressing for an increased number of women sent by troop-contributing countries to UN peace missions, and for women to hold 50% of the UNSG Special Representative and Special Envoy positions has been highlighted as an objective in Ireland’s draft National Action Plan (NAP) on UNSCR 1325. It is intended that the Action Plan, currently still undergoing revision, will be finalised in 2011. Progress on this issue will then be measured through the ongoing M&E framework of the NAP.
 - The issue of supporting the exclusion of impunity for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, including gender-based crimes, from post-conflict amnesty provisions has been highlighted as an objective in Ireland’s draft National Action Plan (NAP) on UNSCR 1325. It is

intended that the Action Plan, currently still undergoing revision, will be finalised in 2011. Progress on this issue will then be measured through the ongoing M&E framework of the NAP.

Objective 17 – D
To ensure the integration of gender perspectives into all parts of the United Nations System.

CONTEXT

27. Ireland was at the forefront of the United Nations reform process on system wide coherence, including ways to improve coordination of the four UN gender entities in addressing women's development issues. Support to the UN's work on combating gender-based violence is detailed above as well as other support to UN agencies.

ACTIONS 2010

28. The following actions have been reported by Department of Foreign Affairs and Irish Aid during 2010:

28.1 UN Women

- As was noted previously in Chapter 2, in July 2010, a new UN organisation for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment – UN Women - was established to consolidate the four existing UN bodies on women; United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), International Training and Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI).
- Irish Aid was to the forefront in advocating for the establishment of this new organisation. Ireland played an active role in the negotiations to agree the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 64/289 for the establishment of this new Gender Entity.
- The main roles of UN Women are:
 - To support inter-governmental bodies, such as the Commission on the Status of Women, in their formulation of policies, global standards and norms.
 - To help Member States to implement these standards, standing ready to provide suitable technical and financial support to those countries that request it, and to forge effective partnerships with civil society.
 - To hold the UN system accountable for its own commitments on gender equality, including regular monitoring of system-wide progress.
- In September 2010, the UN Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, announced the appointment of Ms. Michelle Bachelet as the first Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women. Ms. Bachelet was President of Chile from 2006 to 2010.
- In 2010, Irish Aid allocated €2 million to the High Commissioner for Human Rights and €650,000 to support the newly established UN-Women.

CHAPTER 6

IMPLEMENTING THE NATIONAL WOMEN'S STRATEGY

Objective 18
To implement gender mainstreaming
as the principal instrument for the achievement of gender equality in Ireland.

CONTEXT

1. The Gender Equality Division of the D/JELR has an advisory role in relation to gender mainstreaming and the National Development Plan and the National Strategic Reform Programme, together with other national policy instruments. Work on the development of gender mainstreaming was started in 2009 and will be a focus for 2011 and beyond.

ACTIONS 2010

2. The following actions have been reported by Gender Equality Division during 2010:
 - Further work on the implementation of the mainstreaming process developed in 2009 with the assistance of funds from EU PROGRESS was placed on hold in 2010 due in the main to the extensive programme of restructuring being undertaken in Government Departments as a result of the economic down turn and the streamlining necessitated by the Croke Park Agreement in order to achieve significant cost reductions. Consideration will be given to further work in this field as resources permit.
 - The Gender Equality Division provides an oversight role in relation to the mainstreaming of gender equality as a horizontal principle in accordance with the regulations government EU (ERDF and ESF) funding provided under the Operational Programmes of the National Strategic Reform Programme. The Division has arranged a couple of work shops for the Regional Operational Programmes.
 - The Division also reviews the reports submitted on the implementation of all parts of the Operational Programmes each year and reports on the extent to which gender is adequately mainstreamed at each of the Monitoring Committees.
 - The Division carries out a similar role for the ESF supported Human Capital Investment Operational Programme which includes labour market activation and training as its key elements.

Objective 19
To provide financial support to implement the National Women's Strategy.

CONTEXT

3. The work to implement the objectives contained in the National Women's Strategy falls within the remit of a large number of Government Departments and their Agencies. Accordingly the funding for the Strategy flows through the funding voted by the Exchequer for each relevant Government Department. At this stage, gender budgeting is not undertaken in Ireland and it is not therefore possible to measure that part of the annual Exchequer funding which is allocated specifically to women or to actions and initiatives directly linked to the National Women's Strategy.

4. The Human Capital Investment Operational Programme 2007 - 2013 makes an allocation of European Social Funds available to the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs¹⁰ to support positive actions under the Equality for Women Measure.

ACTIONS 2010

5. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2010:

5.1 Gender Equality Division - *Equality for Women Measure*

- Mention has been made previously in the relevant chapters of the impact of the ESF supported Equality for Women Measure on different parts of the Strategy. The text which follows is a more detailed report on the implementation of the Measure to date.
- The purpose of the Equality for Women Measure is to make funding available to foster the engagement and advancement of women and gender equality in a number of economic sectors by focusing on four main Strands:

TABLE 19
FOUR STRANDS OF THE EQUALITY FOR WOMEN MEASURE

STRAND	TARGET GROUP
1. Access to Employment	Women, largely experiencing disadvantage and outside the labour market
2. Developing Female Entrepreneurship	Women who are either budding entrepreneurs or early stage entrepreneurs
3. Career Development for Women in Employment	Women in employment who might want to advance their careers
4. Fostering Women as Decision -Makers	Women who have the capacity to become decision-makers, including in executive management, boards (state and executive), politics, etc.

- The Measure is supported by European Social Funding under the Human Capital Investment Operational Programme (HCIOP) 2007-2013. The Measure is administered by Pobal Ltd. on behalf of the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs¹¹.
- In late 2009, thirty-six projects received funding of €30,000 each, under Strand 1 of the EWM to provide women (currently outside the labour market and in areas of socio-economic disadvantage) with the social skills, education and training to enable them to enter or return to the labour market. In 2010, these projects were afforded the opportunity to renew this funding for a further phase, subject to their having achieved their targets. In total, thirty-two of the original projects availed of this second tranche of funding, which ended in October 2010, as a new phase of the Measure commenced.
- Total expenditure on this initial phase of the Equality for Women Measure was €1.839 million (excluding administration).
- A new phase of the Equality for Women Measure 2010-2013 was launched in May 2010 with an open call for applications for funding of up to €50,000 each per annum (renewable for one or more years) under Strands 1, 2 and 3 (see Table 21 above).
- Over 200 applications were received under this phase with each application appraised by Pobal Ltd. in accordance with the criteria set out for the Measure. The outcome was announced in Autumn 2010 and by year end forty-two new projects had entered into contracts to deliver projects with the possibility (subject to conditions being met) of a renewal. The total funding commitment exceeds €1.9 million per annum. For the breakdown of projects by Strand see Table 22 below:

¹⁰ Since the General Election in February 2011, the Equality brief now falls under the remit of the new Department of Justice and Equality. See Postscript for further information.

¹¹ Now Department of Justice and Equality again

**TABLE 20
BREAKDOWN OF EWM PROJECTS BY STRAND**

STRAND	No of projects selected
1. Access to Employment	31
2. Developing Female Entrepreneurship	10
3. Career Development for Women in Employment	1
4. Fostering Women as Decision -Makers	Yet to be launched

- During 2010, over 75 projects were active in supporting the development of women’s economic engagement under the EWM and 42 of these projects will continue into 2011. These projects provided training for over 4,700 women. As table XX below shows a significant number of the participants came from vulnerable groups:

**TABLE 21
EWM PARTICIPANTS FROM VULNERABLE GROUPS**

	Number
Minorities: (Member of the Travelling Community)	96
Migrants:	527
Disabled:	325
Other disadvantaged people: (Lone Parents)	194
Total number of participants	4,797

- About 2,170 of the participants were early school leavers (had not completed upper cycle in secondary school). The Measure also attracted over 600 older participants (aged 55 plus). This links with the EU target of encouraging older men and women to re-engage with the labour market.
- Projects report that the following resources were produced in 2010 as part of EWM projects:
 - AkiDwA produced an Information Booklet on ‘Access to Employment and Education for Migrants’ and, to date, 3,556 copies have been disseminated. A summary of key parts of the employment booklet were condensed and produced in a leaflet which was translated into Arabic, Chinese and French and has been distributed to organisations and individuals.
 - Comhar na nOileán – undertook a Skills Audit on the Irish Islands and identified the Labour Market Inequalities for Island Women, which has been written up in a report format.
 - Pavee Point – produced a written overview of the ‘Gateways to Further Education for Traveller Women’ programme.

<p>Objective 20 To ensure that the National Women’s Strategy is fully implemented</p>

CONTEXT

6. This report covers progress made in the implementation of the Strategy during 2010.

ACTIONS 2010

7. The following actions have been reported by Government Departments and Agencies during 2010:
- The National Women’s Strategy Monitoring Committee is tasked with overseeing the implementation of the National Women’s Strategy 2007-2016. The Monitoring Committee met in May 2010. At this meeting the Monitoring Committee discussed the Progress Report on the implementation of the Strategy during 2009 and approved the Terms of Reference for the Monitoring Committee’s ‘Sub-Committee on Women in Decision-Making’.

- The second progress report on the implementation of the Strategy, entitled *‘Implementing the National Women’s Strategy 2007-2016, Progress 2009’*, was submitted to Government in November 2010 and was subsequently published in December 2010 on the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs website (www.pobail.ie).
- This 2010 Progress Report on Implementing the National Women’s Strategy details the progress made under the 20 Key Objectives contained in the Strategy and will be submitted to Government in 2011.
- As reported earlier, a Sub-Committee of the Monitoring Committee has been established to address the issue of women and decision-making.
- Work on a periodic review of the Strategy has also commenced and will be completed during 2011.

POSTSCRIPT

Following the General Election on 25 February 2011, the newly elected Taoiseach, Mr. Enda Kenny, T.D., announced on 9 March 2011 a number of changes in Departmental responsibilities. Among these was the decision to transfer responsibility for equality issues from the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs to the newly restructured Department of Justice and Equality.

Mr. Alan Shatter, T.D., was appointed as Minister for Justice, Equality and Defence. Ms. Kathleen Lynch, T.D., was appointed as Minister of State with responsibility for Disability, Equality, Mental Health and Older People.

Minister of State Lynch has agreed to chair the National Women's Strategy Monitoring Committee and the NWS Sub-Committee on Women in Decision-Making in the coming period.

APPENDIX I

COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION

A Strengthened Commitment to Equality between Women and Men A Women's Charter

Declaration by the European Commission on the occasion of the 2010 International Women's Day

in commemoration of the 15th anniversary of the adoption of a Declaration and Platform for Action at the Beijing UN World Conference on Women and of the 30th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

INTRODUCTION

Equality between women and men is a fundamental right, enshrined in Article 2 of the Treaty on European Union and in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. It is one of the common values on which the European Union is founded.

Economic and social cohesion, sustainable growth and competitiveness, and tackling the demographic challenge depend on real equality between women and men.

Europe has made remarkable progress towards equality between men and women during the past decades: it has taken commitment to heart, put partnership into action, and combined its resources and instruments – legal, political and financial – to bring about change. Today, more girls than boys graduate from universities. Today, more women than ever before participate in Europe's labour force. Today, Europe fulfils more of its talents and uses more of its skills.

Obstacles to real equality, however, remain.

On the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the Beijing UN World Conference on Women, we reiterate and strengthen the European Commission's commitment to making equality between women and men a reality. We will do this by strengthening the gender perspective in all our policies throughout our term of office and by bringing forward specific measures to promote gender equality. We pledge to dedicate the necessary resources to realise it.

In particular, the following principles of equality between women and men will underpin actions under this European Commission's term of office:

Equal economic independence

Discrimination, educational stereotypes, labour market segregation, precarious employment conditions, involuntary part-time work and the unbalanced sharing of care responsibilities with men affect the life choices and the economic independence of many women.

We reaffirm our commitment to ensure the full realisation of women's potential and the full use of their skills, to facilitate a better gender distribution on the labour market and more quality jobs for women. We will resolutely promote gender equality in the Europe 2020 strategy, consider quantified targets where appropriate, and promote genuine opportunities for both women and men to enjoy a work-life balance.

Equal pay for equal work and work of equal value

Women in the European Union still earn on average 18% less than men for every hour worked. They have fewer resources during their working life and in retirement, face more difficulties in accessing finance, and so are more affected than men by all forms of poverty, including in-work poverty.

We reaffirm our commitment to a forceful mobilisation of all instruments, both legislative and non-legislative, to close the gender pay gap. The gender pay gap is a cost Europe cannot afford. Together with the 27 EU Member States, we will work to significantly reduce the gender pay gap in the European Union by the end of this European Commission's term of office.

Equality in decision-making

Women still do not have full access to the sharing of power and decision-making. Gender balance in decision-making, in political and economic life and in the public and private sectors, will help Europe shape more effective policies, develop a gender-aware knowledge-based society, and create a stronger and more prosperous democracy.

We reaffirm our commitment to pursue the fairer representation of women and men in positions of power in public life and the economy. We will use our powers, including Union incentive measures, to promote a greater share of women in positions of responsibility.

At our own level, we will commit to making all efforts in order to improve gender balance within the Commission.

Dignity, integrity and an end to gender-based violence

The full enjoyment of fundamental rights by women and girls is an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights and is essential for the advancement of women and girls, peace, security and development. Gender-based violence, including harmful customary or traditional practices, constitutes a violation of fundamental rights, in particular human dignity, the right to life, and the right to the integrity of the person. Such violation prevents the exercise of a self-determined life.

We reaffirm our commitment to ensure that respect for fundamental rights is at the core of our activities. We will undertake efforts to eliminate gender inequalities in access to healthcare and in health outcomes.

Europe does not tolerate gender-based violence. We will step up efforts to eradicate all forms of violence and to provide support for those affected. We will put in place a comprehensive and effective policy framework to combat gender-based violence. We will strengthen our action to eradicate female genital mutilation and other acts of violence, including by means of criminal law, within the limits of our powers.

Gender equality beyond the union

Our ambition is not limited to the borders of the Union. Gender equality must be fully incorporated into our external policies too so as to foster the social and economic independence and advancement of women and men throughout the world. The EU is committed to promoting gender equality in all contexts, including conflict and post-conflict countries. Reducing gender inequalities, tackling gender-based violence, and promoting women's rights are essential for developing sustainable and democratic societies.

We reaffirm our commitment to the vigorous pursuit of gender equality in our relations with third countries, raise awareness of the rights of women, and push for the implementation of existing international instruments. We will promote and strengthen cooperation with international and regional organisations on advancing gender equality, making full use of the whole range of available instruments and tools. We will also support both State and Non-State actors in their efforts to promote gender equality in partner countries.

We declare our readiness to work on gender equality in partnership with all stakeholders, including civil society, at national, European, and international levels and in particular on the principles set out in this Charter. We will present a new strategy for equality between women and men in 2010 for the term of office of this European Commission and we will report regularly on its implementation.

We reaffirm our personal and collective commitment to a Europe of equality between women and men which offers a better life and a sustainable future for all.

APPENDIX II

Terms of Reference of the Sub-Committee on Women in Decision-Making

The Terms of Reference agreed by the Monitoring Committee for the Sub-Committee are as follows:

1. Identify and propose key strategies which could be pursued to advance the aim of increasing the role of women as decision-makers in politics, the judiciary, the public sector, including State Boards, the Diplomatic Service, private sector enterprise, including corporate decision making and corporate boards.
2. Review the existing situation and international comparators.
3. Examine literature and models of good practice in the promotion of women in decision-making in Ireland and abroad, for example from European Union Institutions and Council of Europe.
4. Undertake a focused consultation process as necessary.
5. Examine the recommendations of the Oireachtas Sub Committee on Women in Politics and recommendations from the Council of Europe in relation to female participation in the democratic process and propose ways forward, where appropriate, in advancing these recommendations.
6. Based on literature review and experience in other countries, develop recommendations suitable for the Irish political structure, bearing in mind the current review of the Irish political structure being undertaken by the Constitution Review Group.
7. In relation to other fields, and based on good international practice, propose recommendations for the advancement of women as appropriate.
8. Consider the development of a talent bank of suitable female candidates for consideration for decision-making roles on State Boards.
9. Report regularly on progress to National Women's Strategy Monitoring Committee.
10. Complete work within a year of first meeting.

APPENDIX III

EXTRACT ON WOMEN AND POLITICS FROM REPORT OF JOINT OIREACHTAS COMMITTEE ON THE CONSTITUTION ON THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM

Representation of women in Dáil Éireann

- 5.25 The under-representation of women in Dáil Éireann and the challenges that women face in seeking election was a recurring theme during the Committee's hearings. Politics is primarily perceived as a male profession in this country. While women represent 50% of the population only approximately 13% of the members of Dáil Éireann are women, well below the 'critical mass' level of 35% that is considered necessary in order to have a decisive influence on the culture of legislative institutions.
- 5.26 The Committee recognises that, by international standards, progress towards full gender equality or even balance in the Dáil Éireann has been lamentably slow. It is probably idle to dwell on the potential reasons for this. The Committee would certainly wish that everything possible that could be done by way of encouragement, persuasion or even (to the extent it was constitutionally possible) incentivisation of political parties through legislation to ensure greater female participation, should be done.
- 5.27 Evidence considered by the Committee suggests that when more women candidates run for political office, more women are elected to political office. The process of candidate selection within political parties therefore is an important factor in achieving a more balanced representation of women and men in the Parliament.
- 5.28 In the 2007 general election, out of a total of 470 candidates that ran for election, just 82 were women, representing 17% of the total number of candidates. In 60% of the constituencies, no women candidates were nominated by the two main parties, Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael. In 5 of the 43 constituencies the electorate was presented with an all-male list of candidates.
- 5.29 The Committee considers that positive measures in favour of women candidates are required to redress this gender imbalance, while such measures should not restrict the freedom of political parties to select candidates most suited to represent particular constituencies.
- 5.30 The Committee was advised that measures which went further than merely encouraging political parties to take positive measures with regard to female candidates would raise serious constitutional questions. The right of political parties to organise their own affairs and to select their own candidates without interference is a key feature of political liberty in any free society and this right is plainly protected by the right of association in Article 40.6.1°. The Committee considers that any measure which coerced political parties to select certain types of candidates or which imposed a quota in that regard would probably be unconstitutional.
- 5.31 The Committee gave consideration to a proposal under which enhanced political funding would be available to political parties who fielded a sufficient number of female candidates. But since it is clear from the Supreme Court's decision in *Kelly. Minister for Environment* [2002] 4 IR 191, that any form of preferential funding of candidates using public monies is prima facie unconstitutional, the Committee did not consider that this was a practicable proposition.
- 5.32 So far as public funding is concerned, the Committee sees no difficulty whatever in recommending that political parties should be required to account on steps they have taken to promote gender equality as a condition of public funding. Beyond this, legal and constitutional uncertainties remain. Ideally, the Committee would like to see a situation where political parties were required to take pro-active steps to promote female candidates as a condition of public funding, but it recognises that if any such legislation were to be introduced; such a measure might prove constitutionally frail for the reasons already stated. The details of any such proposed measure would therefore require particular scrutiny by the Attorney General prior to enactment.
- 5.33 Access to support networks for women candidates was highlighted as an important consideration in helping to increase the number of women seeking election to political office. In its written submission

to the Committee, the National Women's Council of Ireland recommended the establishment of a national cross-party 'Women's Political Caucus' to provide a support base to facilitate women's political participation. The Committee supports this recommendation.

- 5.34 The Equality for Women Measure (EWM) is a positive action programme, administered by the Department of Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs, which aims to foster gender equality in accordance with the National Women's Strategy 2007-2016. The strategic aim of the EWM is '*[t]o advance the role of women in the Irish economy and in decision making at all levels in accordance with the National Women's Strategy 2007-2016*'. The objectives of the Measure are to make funding available to support positive actions which: improve women's access to education, training and personal development in preparation for employment; support women who are undertaking entrepreneurial activity; and support women who are in employment to advance their careers. The Committee considers that these objectives should include the provision of funding to support positive actions to enhance women's participation in the political process.
- 5.35 The Committee notes that the Minister for Equality, Integration and Human Rights, will chair the National Women's Strategy Sub-Committee on 'Women and Decision-making' which is to be established to consider advancement of women into politics and other decision-making roles. The Committee welcomes this move and considers that strengthening the role of women in the political decision-making process will form an important element of this work. The evidence and submissions received by the Committee over the course of its review will provide a valuable input into the work of the Sub-Committee.
- 5.36 The Committee expects that the Sub-Committee will identify appropriate strategies to enhance women's participation in public life. The guidelines that the Sub-Committee will develop will provide a framework for best practice in facilitating women's involvement in decision-making and political life.

Recommendations

- *The Committee recommends that political parties pursue positive measures to promote gender equality in its membership, including in the selection of candidates for election.*
- *The Committee recommends that the Attorney General be asked to examine the constitutional implications of a proposed measure under which public funding of parties would be regulated so that a proportion of the funding allocated to a party would be determined by the number of women candidates it nominates for election.*
- *The Committee recommends that the guidelines to be published by the National Women's Strategy Sub-Committee on 'Women and Decision-making' be sent to all registered political parties in receipt of public funding to highlight best practice in facilitating women's involvement in political life.*
- *The Committee recommends that political parties be required, as one of the conditions for public funding, to submit an annual statement to the new Electoral Commission, for publication, setting out in detail the policies and actions being pursued by them to promote gender equality in their electoral candidates and parliamentary representation.*
- *The Committee recommends that the objectives of the 'Equality for Women Measure' explicitly include the provision of public funding to support positive actions to encourage women's participation in the political process.*